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HISTORY

OF

THE FRENCH REVOLUTION.

1789—1795.

Vol. II.

HISTORY

OF

THE FRENCH REVOLUTION.

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35534

TRANSLATED FROM THE THIRD EDITION OF THE ORIGINAL GERMAN WORK,

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IN FOUR VOLUMES.—VOL. II.

LONDON:
JOHN MURRAY, ALBEMARLE STREET.
1867.

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WARLIKE PREPARATIONS IN GERMANY.

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THE catastrophe of the 10th of August, which made the extreme democratic party masters of Paris, rendered a hostile collision between the Revolution and the German Powers inevitable.

We have already seen the commencement of the dispute between these parties, and observed that it owed its origin exclusively to the French National Assembly; and that it was especially the Gironde which prompted France to attack the Emperor. Let us now pass over to the German side, and observe how the developement of revolutionary hostility affected the affairs of our country, and what resolutions the policy of the great German Powers induced it to take. In doing so, we must return once more to the last few months of the Emperor Leopold's life.

After the acceptance of the Constitution by Louis XVI., the Emperor indulged for a time a confident hope, that the French question was solved, and that he was relieved from all fear of trouble from that quarter. He had cares enough upon him to make him heartily congratulate himself on this

result. In the German Empire, many of the more powerful Princes were in a state of irritation against Austria, whose recent friendship with Prussia—hitherto looked upon as the firmest bulwark against Imperial encroachment—excited the liveliest apprehensions in Bavaria and Würtemberg, in Cassel and Hanover. In his own provinces also, Leopold found abundant sources of future dangers. No one trusted the present calm in Hungary, and in the lately subjected Belgium, affairs were so far from being in a settled and consolidated state, that the Estates of Brabant were in open opposition to the Government, and the Imperial generals were loudly calling for reinforcements. In foreign affairs, the Polish question—the next in importance to the French—was still unsettled, and daily presented fresh difficulties. Leopold had repeatedly renewed his proposition in St. Petersburg to recognise the elevation of the Elector of Saxony to the hereditary throne of Poland.[1] But Catharine had not allowed herself to be drawn into giving any answer; and the nearer she approached to the conclusion of a definitive peace with the Turks, the more openly she manifested in Warsaw her aversion to the constitution of May. The Elector of Saxony, therefore, hesitated to commit himself to the acceptance of the throne of Poland; and Leopold was obliged to acknowledge that here too every thing depended on the firmness of his Prussian alliance; and he had every reason to augur an unfavourable reception of his Polish plan in Berlin. All these circumstances cooperated to dispose him as much as possible against a war with France. The fact that Russia now began to show the greatest favour to the Emigrés, and to preach, at Berlin and Vienna, a crusade against the wicked Jacobins, only served to confirm the Emperor in his peaceful sentiments. He rightly concluded that Catharine wished to entangle the German Powers in a struggle with France, that she might have her own way in

[1] Kaunitz to the Austrian Ambassador in Berlin, Prince Reuss, Jan. 4. 1792.

Poland; and he was not at all inclined to be the dupe of so shallow an artifice. Among his Ministers, Prince Kaunitz always had a conviction that a French war would be the greatest of misfortunes, and the Vice-Chancellor, Count Cobenzl, who held different opinions, was unable to gain a hearing from the Emperor, who carefully avoided everything which could afford the French a pretext for a quarrel. He received the new constitutional ambassador, in spite of the most lively representations and protests on the part of the Emigrés and the Austrian nobility. When his Ministers were divided on the question whether the Empire should insist on the restoration of the German Princes to their rights in Alsace, or enter into negotiations for compensating them, he decided for the milder course. At the same time he set about bringing his alliance with Prussia to a definitive conclusion, in order to secure to himself a firm support for every emergency.

On the 17th of November—a week after the enactment of the first edict against the Emigrés—Prince Reuss made a communication on this subject to the Prussian Ministry, and on this occasion declared himself empowered to commence at any moment the formal draft of an alliance. He enquired into the views of Prussia in respect to the number of men she would furnish in case of war, and was satisfied when the Prussian Ministers proposed a contingent of 20,000 men. In fact he always advocated the principle of acting strictly on the defensive. "We are now convinced," wrote the Ministers to their ambassador at Vienna, "that Austria will undertake nothing against France." This persuasion was soon afterwards fully confirmed by Kaunitz, who descanted in the severest terms on the intrigues of the Emigrés on the Rhine, which it was not in the interest of any Power to support. It was ridiculous, he said, in the French Princes, and in Russia and Spain, to declare the acceptance of the constitution by the King compulsory, and therefore void; and still more so to dispute the right of Louis XVI.

to alter the constitution at all. He said that they would vainly endeavour to goad Austria into a war, which could only have the very worst consequences for Louis and the present predominance of the moderate party in France. He further enlarged on the blessings of the existing Austro-Prussian alliance, and expressed his willingness to prepare a more definite draft of the proposed treaty. Here, again, we see that without the machinations of the Girondists, the revolutionary war would never have been commenced.

It is true, indeed, that at this time a very perceptible change took place in the opinions of the second German potentate—the King of Prussia. Immediately after the Congress of Pillnitz, great numbers of French Emigrés, who had been driven from Vienna by the coldness of Leopold, had betaken themselves to Berlin. At the Prussian Court they met with a hospitable reception, and aroused in the King, by their graphic descriptions, a warm interest for the victims of the Revolution—more especially for the Royal family, but also for the exiled nobles. Their representations had so great an effect, that the warlike mien assumed by the Girondists in December—which had caused so much fear and anxiety in Vienna—was regarded by the King of Prussia with martial satisfaction. He was surprised, indeed, at Leopold's longsuffering patience, but thought that he would not be likely to submit to many more affronts; and meanwhile he loaded the Emigrés with marks of favour of every kind, and thereby excited in them the most exaggerated hopes. Yet the King was far from intending to risk any important interest of the State for the sake of his protégés; he had no idea of pursuing an aggressive policy towards France; and the only point in which he differed from Leopold was in the feeling with which he regarded the developement of the warlike tendencies of the French. His Ministers, moreover, were, without exception, possessed by the same ideas as Prince Kaunitz; that a French war would be a misfortune to all Europe. They had little trouble, therefore, in inducing

the King to allow the Emperor Leopold—who was so much more nearly concerned—to take the initiative in this matter, and even to receive the Austrian proposals with the greatest caution. When the French Government began to set on foot its first army, on the 16th of December, and to threaten the Electorate of Trèves, a petition arrived at Berlin from the Emigrés praying the King to give them a refuge in Anspach and Baireuth; another from Trèves, begging for a Prussian corps of 4,000 men for its protection; and a proposal from Austria that Prussia should join in sending an identical note to Paris. The King immediately declined the two first proposals,[1] but expressed his readiness to join the Emperor in sending a strong protest to the French Government against any violation of the soil of the German Empire; but he thought that a general declaration concerning the Revolution would be just as hazardous at the present moment as in the preceeding Summer. Such a step, he said, would be critical and even compromising, if they were not in a position to support their words by energetic deeds. He would not however, he said, evade a definite wish of the Emperor, and he was therefore willing that the manifesto should threaten an armed intervention, in case of any personal violence towards the Royal family, or the refusal of compensation to the injured Alsatian Princes; but he was decidedly averse to making any mention of constitutional questions, or even of the efforts of the republicans. He concluded by saying; "As from the position of my dominions, I have no direct political interest in the matter, and should only intervene from personal sympathy with Louis XVI., and as a member of the Empire, I should be obliged—should war unhappily arise—to insist upon a just compensation, for any losses and dangers."

So far removed were they even in Berlin—crowded as it was with Emigrés—from any active opposition to the

[1] Autograph letter to the Ministers of Dec. 28th.

changes in France, and from a war of principles against the Revolution!

In consequence of this declaration of Prussia, the Emperor, as we have seen, ordered that the Emigrés in Trèves should be disarmed; and contented himself with giving notice in Paris, that his Belgian troops would prevent any violation of the Imperial frontier. In the present mood of the Parisian rulers, indeed, he could not deny the possibility of a breach, and consequently Kaunitz instructed the Ambassador to lay before the King of Prussia, on the 4th of January, the outline of a definitive treaty. This document adhered throughout to the ground of simple defence, and contained, with regard to France, nothing but the clause, that both Powers should use their efforts to bring about a European coalition. Negociations then went on smoothly for the most part; the two Powers fixed the amount of the contingent to be furnished by each as a member of the Diet, and promised one another to invite the other Powers, especially England and Russia, to cooperate with them. It was only on two points that a difference in their respective views was observable. The one concerned Belgium—Austria demanding aid against internal rebellion, especially in the present disaffected state of the Belgian population; while Prussia, on the other hand, would only assent to this, on condition that a secret article should exempt Belgium from its operation. The second point of difference—respecting Poland—was of more importance. Kaunitz, alarmed by the growing coldness of Russia, had already several times sounded the Prussian Ambassador in Vienna concerning the views of his Court, and had received, by express command of the King, the answer, that Prussia could only regard the new Polish constitution as seriously affecting her own interests;—that her Polish treaty of 1790 solely referred to the protection of the Republic from foreign interference—and that not the slightest obligation could be deduced from it with respect to the constitution. There was, indeed, at that time, a way by which Prussia might

perhaps have been rendered more favourable to the Austrian views. The hand of a Princess of the Ducal house of Courland was open to competition; and Prussia conceived the idea of using this opportunity of placing the chief power in that Duchy in the hands of the younger Prince of Orange, who was entirely devoted to Prussian interests. If Austria assented to this, and helped to carry out the plan by her influence in Petersburg and Warsaw, Prussia might perhaps consider herself compensated for the aggrandisement of the house of Saxony in Poland, and learn to look with more friendly eyes on the new condition of things in that Republic. But the Viennese Government could not make up their minds to the increase of Prussian influence, and politely declined the proposal. Kaunitz, however, still made the attempt to include Poland in the treaty, and inserted an article guaranteeing the free Polish constitution,—*viz.* that of the 3rd of May 1791. His despatch of the 4th of January approached the matter very cautiously, but drew nevertheless a clear and perfect outline of the Austrian system. It said that nothing ought to be done without a complete understanding between the three neighbouring Powers; that Austria would neither proceed in this affair without the voluntary consent of Russia, nor endeavour to eclipse the Prussian influence in Petersburg; that in Poland itself, no increase of power should be allowed which could become dangerous to any of the three Powers, or further the views of the Polish enthusiasts and democrats. But all these flattering representations had only one object in view; to render the main point—the common guarantee of the new Constitution, and the creation of Poland into an hereditary monarchy under the Elector of Saxony—agreeable to the Prussian Court. The interpretation put upon this last clause is indeed touched upon, but as lightly and considerately as possible. In the course of the narration it is quietly announced that the Elector of Saxony, in case of his accepting the crown, desired that it should remain for ever united with the Electoral hat of Saxony;

and that consequently the succession to the latter should be transferred from his daughter to his brothers. "The Emperor," remarked Kaunitz, "desires from personal delicacy, (the eldest of these brothers being his own son-in-law) to abstain from all participation in this question; although he too considers that the lasting union of the two crowns would most conduce to the interests of the three neighbouring Courts."

The Prussian Ministers, it appears, allowed this so called Saxon plan to remain for the time in abeyance; and in the main point, also, they were by no means well pleased with the Austrian communications.. Before, however, any discussion of these questions could take place, the French war party took another step in advance, and the decree of the 15th January, which virtually made the struggle inevitable, was promulgated—threatening the Emperor with an immediate rupture unless he distinctly renounced the European concert. Leopold saw the danger approaching, but still without being able fully to realize its imminence; he therefore laid before Prussia a more detailed programme of his views respecting France, the discussion of which once more manifested the purely defensive attitude assumed by the German Powers. He laid great stress, as usual, on the necessity that all Europe should take part in this great work, and that every idea of a counter-revolution, or the restoration of the former state of things, should be laid aside. The King declared his full assent to these views. Leopold then proposed that the Powers should make the following demands of the French Government; the withdrawal of the three armies from the frontiers;—a cessation of the threats directed against the public peace of Germany;—compensation for the injured Princes of the Empire;—restoration of Avignon and Venaissin to the Pope;—and the acknowledgement of existing treaties with the States of Europe. To those points which had exclusive reference to the restitution of the former foreign relations of France, Prussia gave her assent; with respect to internal questions, Leopold thought they ought likewise to

demand full freedom and security for Louis XVI. and his family, and the renunciation of all republican intrigues. Instead of this, the Berlin Government thought they ought to require the dissolution of the Jacobin club. To give effect to these demands, Leopold proposed that an army of 40,000 men should be held in readiness by each of the two Powers; the King was of opinion that at least 50,000 should be set on foot. Both Emperor and King agreed, without further discussion, that the Emigrés should remain entirely inactive. The last question brought forward was that of compensation; on the discussion of which Kaunitz was at first very unwilling to enter, while the Prussian Ambassador repeatedly maintained its absolute necessity. Accordingly, the note of the 26th recognized the justice of such a claim, both in case of actual war and of a mere warlike demonstration; and the King, on his part, was ready to content himself with the concession of the principle; since every more definite arrangement would at the present moment be manifestly accompanied by the greatest dificulties.

On all these points, therefore, they were in the main agreed; but the case was very different with the Polish question. With respect to this the King had formed an unalterable resolution, and declared to his Ministers that he would never bind himself to support the May Constitution; though he was ready, he said, to guarantee the old Polish Constitution, or even to give a promise that he would not undertake any thing inimical to the new one. In order unmistakably to make known his resolution on this head, he gave orders, on the very same day, that the Marquis Lucchesini should at once put an end to all illusions, by making an express declaration at Warsaw, that the treaty of 1790 did indeed guarantee the independence of Poland, but that as the May Constitution was of a later date than the treaty, and had been made without Prussian cooperation, Prussia could give neither aid nor counsel with respect to it. The Ministers had now the difficult task of rendering this view of the

matter palatable to the Austrian Ambassador. In order that the whole treaty might not suffer shipwreck on this one difficulty, they looked about for intermediate expressions, and instead of the words "guarantee of *the* free Constitution," they proposed the reading, "guarantee of *a* free Constitution," by which neither an absolute rejection, nor a decided approbation, of the new state of things would be expressed. Under other circumstances, Leopold would hardly have consented to this compromise, since it did in fact impose upon him the abandonment of his great Polish-Saxon plan. But the threat of the French war left him no choice; and he made up his mind to sign the treaty, on the above mentioned terms, on the 7th of Feb. This was the first of the baleful effects which the fate of Poland was to experience from the warlike spirit of the French Democracy.

Before following any further the course of these events, two acts ought to be mentioned, which were destined to exercise a powerful indirect influence upon them;—first, the conclusion of a definitive peace between Russia and Turkey,—signed at Jassy, Jan. 9th 1792,—by which Oczakov, together with the sea-coast as far as the Dniester, remained in Russian hands; and, secondly, the seizure, on Jan. 18th., of the Franconian Principalities of Anspach and Baireuth for the King of Prussia;—the Cousin of the King, who had hitherto reigned over these countries, having abdicated four weeks before in his favour. Lastly, let us remember that about the middle of February the moderate party in Paris had made various attempts once more to seize the reins of power,—the success of which would have secured the peace of Europe.

All these circumstances had a similar effect upon Leopold —*viz.* to divert his mind from all the negociations which he had been carrying on with Prussia concerning the French war. He gladly believed, what he eagerly desired, that a struggle might be avoided, which threatened to run counter to all his interests and wishes. The mere possibility of the war had compelled him to witness, without a syllable of op-

position, the aggrandizement of his Prussian rival, by the acquisition of half a million of new subjects; and doubly odious did the actual outbreak of hostilities appear to him, in the event of which he had just been obliged to concede to the King a claim to compensation, that is to a fresh increase of territory. The case was nearly the same in the Polish question. He had already seen the guarantee of the May constitution crumble away in his hands; and should he be involved in a war with France, he had no means of preventing Prussia from overthrowing that constitution, or at any rate from openly supporting the opposite party in Poland. This danger became all the more urgent now that the Empress Catharine had the free disposal of all the forces of her vast Empire. It was well known that Prince Potemkin had assembled all the chiefs of the Polish malcontents about him at Jassy. This Minister, indeed, died in the midst of the plans which were there in preparation; but the attitude of the Russian Ambassador at Vienna, too, became every day more uncompliant. The columns of the Russian army marched in ever increasing numbers from the Turkish towards the Polish frontiers, and energetic operations on the part of Catharine against Poland were to be expected at no distant period. Despatch was therefore evidently necessary, if any thing was still to be done in this affair according to Leopold's wishes; and it was probably in connexion with this that the Elector of Saxony, about the middle of February, at last published his declaration concerning the May Constitution of the Poles. In this document he reserved his final decision respecting his acceptance of the crown, until he should have arrived at an understanding with the three great neighbouring Courts. Meanwhile he stated the conditions which he considered himself obliged to demand,—*viz.* the ratification of the constitution by the provincial diets;—the extension of the royal prerogatives in matters of legislation and war and in foreign affairs; and—what was most

important for Leopold's plan—the right of succession for his brothers in preference to his daughter.

Immediate intelligence of this step was received by the Government in Berlin, who considered that the demands of the Elector must tend to strengthen the power of the Government in Poland, and consequently increase the danger which might arise to Prussia from the new state of things. The disinclination of the Prussian Government to aid in such a work, or even to allow it to be completed, was continually increasing. Yet they could not at present come to any definite resolution, and principally on account of the complete uncertainty of affairs in France, before the *dénouement* of which—whereby, perhaps their whole system might suffer a violent shock—they did not venture to take any decisive measures. They therefore remained in an attitude of expectation, from which they could not be drawn even by a piece of intelligence which nevertheless excited the liveliest interest of the King. Count de Goltz, the Ambassador in Petersburg, wrote word that he had at last obtained trustworthy intelligence respecting the intentions of Catharine against Poland. He had succeeded in getting sight of an autograph letter of the Empress to count Suboff, in which she expresses herself in nearly the following terms: "As soon as peace has been concluded with the Turks, my will is that Repnin should repair to the grand army, draw together as many troops as possible,—about 130,000 men, I think,—and march through the Ukraine into Poland. Igelström will command a corps at Smolensk, and Soltikoff will remain on the frontier with the troops of West Russia and Livonia. If Austria and Prussia should make any opposition, as is probable, I shall offer them compensation or partition." The King replied to the Ambassador with expressions of his royal satisfaction, saying that Count Golz was the first who had procured for him the key to a right understanding of these affairs. He added, that he must observe the deepest secrecy respecting

them, and remain on the watch, but entirely passive, till further orders.

Considering the intensity of the present suspense, however, it was impossible that this state of inactivity could be of long duration. It was like the moment of sultry stillness which generally precedes the outbreak of a storm.

In the first place the most unfavourable news arrived from Paris. The attempts of the Feuillants had failed; Lafayette had separated himself from them and from the Court; and the zeal and confidence of victory among the Democrats were greater then ever. The Emigrés in Berlin were jubilant; they had always declared that no impression was to be made upon the Jacobins except by the edge of the sword, and that all hopes founded on the stability of a moderate middle party were futile. The King of Prussia agreed with them, and determined to begin the unavoidable struggle as quickly as possible. He told his Ministers that war was certain, and that Bischoffswerder ought to go once more to the Emperor, rouse him from his lethargy, arrange a plan of military operations, and discuss the question of compensation.[1] He would listen to no objections, and Bischoffswerder, having received instructions from the King himself, left Berlin, and arrived in Vienna, after a speedy journey, on the 28th of February. But he was not destined again to discuss the fate of Europe with his Imperial patron; for on the 29th the smallpox showed itself, of which Leopold died after three days sickness. The greatest consternation and confusion reigned in Vienna. In the midst of the most dangerous crisis, the State saw itself deprived of a steady and experienced pilot; the most urgent dangers impended on the East and on the West; no one knew to whom the young King

[1] Guadet (*Les Girondins*, I. 187) speaks of a further treaty between Austria and Prussia of Feb. 17th; *c'était toute une contre-revolution*. His quotations from it would certainly justify his description, but unfortunately the alleged treaty never existed.

Francis—he was as yet only king of Hungary and Bohemia—would give his confidence, or what course he would take; nay, his weakly and nervous constitution rendered it doubtful whether he could bear—even for a short period—the burdens of his office. For the present he confirmed the Ministers in their places, and expressed to them his wish to adhere to the political system of his father. But even he could not conceal from himself the danger which threatened him on the side of France; and he therefore ordered one of his most experienced Generals, Prince Hohenlohe-Kirchberg, to be summoned to Vienna, that he might take counsel with Bischoffswerder respecting the warlike measures to be adopted by both Powers, in case of a French attack. At the same time, however, the Polish question was, if possible, to be brought to a decision, and Leopold's plan in all its details was to be categorically recommended for adoption, both in Berlin and Petersburg.

The crisis was now at its height. The policy of Prussia for a long and eventful period was to be decided on. It is important to comprehend with clearness every stage in the progress of these events.

The Austrian Minister, Spielmann, had prepared the memorial on Poland, which Prince Reuss presented at Berlin, on the 10th of March. It represented that Austria and Prussia had the same interest in stopping a source of eternal embarrassment and discussion, by strengthening the cause of peace and order in Poland. That herein lay an especially powerful motive to make the crown of that country hereditary; that for both Powers the Elector of Saxony would be the most acceptable wearer of that crown; nor was it contrary to their interests to extend the right of succession to the brothers of the Elector, and in fact to each successive Elector of Saxony. The important point, the memorial went on to say, was this, that Poland should no longer be dependent on the predominant influence of any one neighbouring Power. It ought not, indeed, to be so strong as to be able

to become dangerous to any of its neighbours: and this contingency would be effectually prevented by imposing a limitation of its army to 40,000 men, by proclaiming its neutrality to all future times, and by both the German Powers—as joint contractors—guaranteeing its constitution on these conditions alone. Russia, it further said, would, it was hoped, give her consent, since by any opposition to so wholesome a scheme, she would betray an unpardonable lust of conquest.

When the King had read this memorial, in which the Saxon-Polish union was brought forward, not as an idea of the feeble Elector, but as a proposal of powerful Austria, he cried out, "We must never give our consent to this." He agreed with his Ministers in the conclusion that nothing would be more dangerous to Prussia, than the formation of such a Power as would result from the proposed lasting union of Poland and Saxony—a Power, which, in alliance with Austria, could immediately overrun Silesia, and in alliance with Russia, might be fatal to East Prussia. The proposed limitation of the Polish army appeared to him a mere delusion, since it would be nullified at the first outbreak of a war. "I am," said the King, "firmly convinced of the loyalty of Austria, or the suggestion of such a plan would fill me with the deepest suspicion."

In the midst of this angry and anxious excitement, which for a moment alienated his heart from Austria, the King received a fresh and no less important despatch from Petersburg. Count Golz announced the first direct communication of Russia respecting Poland. "We see" (the Vice-Chancellor, Count Ostermann, had told him) "in Prussia's repeated request that we would communicate to her our view of Polish affairs, no empty curiosity, or the intention of throwing obstacles in our way, but a sincere wish to come to an understanding. The position is a highly critical one, and our interests run completely parallel. Should Poland be firmly and lastingly united to Saxony, a Power of the first rank

will arise, and one which will be able to exercise the most sensible pressure upon each of its neighbours. We are greatly concerned in this, in consequence of the extension of our Polish frontier; and Prussia is no less so, from the inevitable increase which would ensue of Saxon influence in the German Empire. We therefore suggest, that Prussia, Austria, and Russia, should come to an intimate understanding with one another on this most important subject."

Golz added that he had meanwhile pointed out to the Russian Minister, that Prussia had never been consulted on the subject of the new Polish constitution. He had, he said, no doubt, from Ostermann's communications, that Russia would very soon openly bring forward her plans of conquest; that her object was to gain possession of a new district, which would establish a connecting link with her late Turkish acquisitions. With respect to French affairs, Ostermann had spoken with great indifference, and always recommended the strictest secrecy regarding Poland. He added, that the question lay entirely with the three Powers; that if they were agreed, they might laugh at the rest of the world.

This communication sounded differently in the ears of the King from that which he had received from Austria. The fears which agitated his own mind and those of the Russian chancellor were identical. While Austria called upon him to commit a political suicide, Russia offered her aid in averting the most harassing danger, and even opened a prospect of a considerable territorial increase. The King had no doubt to which of the two Powers he ought to incline. He would have come to terms with Russia on the spot, had not an insurmountable obstacle existed in the new path which was opened to the aggrandizement of Prussia,—*viz.* the Polish treaty of 1790; in which Prussia had expressly bound herself to protect the independence and integrity of Poland. It is true that in his opinion this obligation did not go to the extent of compelling him to maintain the new constitution in opposition to Russia; that it was only a weak

and impotent Poland to which he had promised his support in 1790; while it was now really an entirely new State, which had been established without his cooperation by the Constitution of 1791. The Russians, therefore, might, as far as he was concerned, crush this constitution; he should feel that he had acted up to his engagements if he allowed affairs to be restored to the *status* of 1790. But it was only too evident that the matter would not end here, when once the Russians had entered Poland. If the May Constitution was forced to succumb,—not only to its domestic opponents but also to the armies of Russia,—it was all over both with the threatening power, and even with the independence of Poland itself, which would virtually become a Russian Province. This was perfectly clear to the King; "If Russia," said he, "does not proceed in this matter with perfect disinterestedness, we shall be involved in the most painful embarassment by the treaty of 1790. And it did not admit of the slightest doubt that Russia would make use of the opportunity afforded her, and at the very least take up a stronger position in Poland than in 1790. Who indeed was to hinder her from doing so? The friends of the old constitution in Poland were already entirely dependent on Russia, and the partisans of the new state of things were quite as hostile to Prussia as to Russia. The only course would have been to form a third party, which, by voluntarily returning to the old constitution, might have deprived Russia of all pretexts for invasion, and leaned for support not upon Catharine, but upon the Prussian King. But to perform this task with such insufficient resources, and in the midst of such critical circumstances, would have required far greater material power than Prussia at that time possessed. It might indeed have been possible if Austria had energetically adopted the same view, and in conjunction with Prussia had used every means in her power to attain their common object. Instead of this, however, the King of Prussia had be-

fore him the Austrian note, which proposed a guarantee of the Polish constitution of 1791, and a complete union of Poland and Saxony. Under these circumstances he decided that there was no middle course between the Russian and Austrian plans. On the one side was his Polish treaty of 1790, the immediate consequence of which would be a new breach, and perhaps a war, with Russia, and the final result such a strengthening of Poland, as would throw back the Prussian State, into that subordinate position both in Germany and Europe, which it had occupied in the seventeenth century. On the other side there was, indeed, a manifest breach of faith, but also the salvation of Prussia from a perilous dilemma, and perhaps the extension of her boundaries by a goodly Polish Province. If he wavered at all in this conflict of feeling, the Parisian complications soon put an end to his doubts. In quick succession came the announcements that Delessart's peaceful Ministry had fallen; that King Louis had suffered the deepest humiliation; and that the helm of the State had passed into the hands of the Girondist war party. A declaration of war on the part of France against Francis II. might be daily expected, and the Russian-Polish contest would then only form the less important moiety of the European catastrophe. Austria would now be occupied for a long time in the West; there could be no more question of the formation of a Polish-Saxon State; and Austria could no longer be reckoned upon to protect the constitution of 1791, or even to repel a Russian invasion of Poland. Prussia was bound to aid the Austrians against France, and for many months the King had cherished no more ardent wish than to fulfil this obligation with all his power. Simultaneously to oppose the Empress Catharine, was out of the question. The latter had attained the great object of her wishes—the German Powers were engaged in the West, and she herself had her hands free for the subjugation of Poland. The existence of an independent Polish kingdom was at an end, and the only possible advantage to

Prussia was to appropriate to herself a portion of the new Russian Province.

The King wrote on the 12th of March to his Ministers as follows: "The views of Russia respecting Poland are then very different from the obscure indications which Rasumowski gave to Bischoffswerder in Vienna. Russia is not far removed from thoughts of a new partition; and this would indeed be the most effectual means of limiting the power of a Polish King, whether hereditary or elective. I doubt, however, whether in this case a suitable compensation could be found for Austria; and whether, after such a curtailment of the power of Poland, the Elector of Saxony would accept the crown. Yet if Austria could be compensated, the Russian plan would be the most advantageous for Prussia,—always provided that Prussia received the whole left bank of the Vistula, by the acquisition of which that distant frontier—so hard to be defended—would be well rounded off. This is my judgment respecting Polish affairs."

This was Poland's sentence of death. It was not, as we have seen, the result of a long-existing greed, but a suddenly seized expedient, which seemed to be accompanied with the least evil, in the midst of an unexampled European crisis. I shall leave it an open question whether it was not possible under the then existing circumstances to have acted with more political wisdom; but I doubt whether we can reproach the King, humanly speaking, for acting as he did, in that conflict of duties. One thing is certain, that in this case too, the eternal law of justice has been upheld, which demands atonement for every moral delinquency, whatever may be the reasons and excuses urged in palliation. The breach of faith towards Poland, however unavoidable, has been bitterly avenged on Prussia; and that the warning might be the more deeply felt, it was avenged by the hand, not of the victims, but of the accomplice in the crime.

The resolution was taken, and the next question was, as to the immediate steps towards its execution. Before every

thing else, and as early as the 13th, an answer was given to Prince Reuss, that Prussia would under no circumstances adopt the contents of Spielmann's memorial; but must, on the contrary, emphatically require the renunciation of every plan of the kind. In place of it, an invitation was sent to Francis II. to give his adhesion to the agreement respecting Poland, brought forward by Russia; and at the same time a declaration was forwarded to Alopeus, Catharine's ambassador in Berlin, that Prussia entirely agreed with the views of Ostermann, and wished as soon as possible to discuss the means for the attainment of the important object. The opinion of the Ministers at that time still was, that Russia ought not to proceed against Poland, until the three Powers had come to a perfect understanding on all the details of the question. And, generally speaking, it seemed to them important, not prematurely to betray in St. Petersburg their readiness to join in the partition of Poland, the knowledge of which might increase, to an excessive degree, the demands of the Russian Court.

With all the more zeal did Bischoffswerder urge upon the Court at Vienna the necessity of coming to some energetic resolution on French affairs. The attitude of the Jacobin Ministry left no doubt that war was inevitable; and looking only at the state of things in Paris, the expediency of a bold initiative was undeniable. But in Vienna the former motives for a peaceful policy still existed in undiminished force, and acquired redoubled weight from Prussia's rejection of the Emperor's plan respecting Poland. Kaunitz told Colonel Bischoffswerder that Austria saw herself left in the lurch by the other Powers, and persecuted by England with proposals for a vexatious mediation of peace; that she would therefore only take up arms as a last resort, if the injured Princes of the Empire, or a large portion of the French nation, should formally call upon the Emperor; or, lastly, in case of a French declaration of war. Upon this Frederick William lost all patience. It was in accordance with his

nature to remain for a long time passive, then to blaze up suddenly, and for a while to break through every obstacle; and finally, in the same manner, unexpectedly to sink back into inactivity. Since the resolution taken on the 12th, his whole soul had been filled with fiery zeal for the French war, in which he hoped to chastise the villainy of the Jacobins, gallantly to rescue Louis XVI. and the Emigrés, and, in conclusion, to enlarge his dominions by an important Polish Province. In answer to the communication which Bischoffswerder made on the 27th of March respecting the Austrian programme, he sent word that war had been determined on in Paris, and that consequently the only question before them was respecting the conduct of the war. He himself, he said, looked for safety to rapid and decisive action, and was ready to attack the Revolution with all his might. But he declared in the most emphatic manner, that he would take no part at all in a sluggish war of mere defence. The chief point in this letter—the certainty of war—was confirmed to the Emperor Francis by simultaneous intelligence from Paris; and thus the Austrian Government,—equally hard pressed by friend and foe—resolved with a reluctant sigh to draw the sword.

On the 20th of April the French National Assembly proclaimed war against the King of Hungary and Bohemia. A fortnight later the Prince of Hohenlohe-Kirchberg appeared in Berlin to settle some common plan for the campaign; and at the same time Kaunitz directed Prince Reuss to enter into negociations on the political question of expenditure and compensation. His note gave Prussia the choice of four different systems; the first of which would have announced that the Powers intended, with entire disinterestedness, to carry on a war for the monarchical principle. According to the second system, the Powers were to content themselves with the promise of Louis XVI. to be answerable for the expenses of the war in case of his restoration. By the third, they would take material security for their outlay, by a

permanent occupation of some of the Provinces of France. The fourth contemplated the acquisition of territory of equal extent and intrinsic value for both the Powers, and this last, added Kaunitz, would probably be accompanied by the greatest difficulties. Count Schulenburg, by frankly seconding the martial ardour of the King, had acquired a leading influence in the royal councils, and carried on the negotiations with Prince Reuss almost without consulting his colleagues. He immediately sent a reply to the Prince, to the effect that Prussia—as it had uniformly declared since the previous summer—could only engage in the war on condition of receiving an adequate compensation. Prince Reuss complained that by making these conditions, Prussia was choosing the longest and most intricate of the four paths which lay open to her, and declared that it was out of his power to find available territories for the purpose required. At the same time he begged the Prussian Minister to make some definite proposal, as Austria would do her utmost to further the interests of her august ally. Both statesmen well knew with what secret mistrust each of these Powers contemplated the aggrandizement of the other; their deliberations were therefore conducted with slow and anxious caution, and months passed by before their respective demands were reduced to any definite shape.

The difficulty thus experienced in making any progress in the main question, afforded but faint hopes of an harmonious cooperation of the two Powers in the impending struggle. Count Alvensleben, who of all the Prussian Ministers was the least favourably disposed to Austria, repeatedly warned his colleagues not to send a man into the field until their relations with Austria were made entirely clear, and the acquisitions demanded by Prussia fully recognized by Austria in a formal treaty. But the King could not make up his mind to so straightforward a proceeding. With him the war against the Jacobins was as dear an object as the acquisition of the Polish province, and in direct opposition to his

Minister he thought that the first thing was to come to blows, and that the compensation would follow as a matter of course. To curb the Revolution, moreover, now seemed to him a truly royal task, and a refreshing change in the monotony of life. All his thoughts and conversation were directed to the possible events of the campaign; he resolved to accompany his army in person; in the afternoons he would ride out in the pouring rain to test his campaigning habiliments; and in the evenings no one was more welcome to him than some of the French Emigrés, with whom he indulged in alluring pictures of victory and restoration, and towards whom his generosity was so boundless, that within ten months he bestowed above five million francs on the exiled Princes. For the moment no expression of opposite opinions was able to induce him to take a calmer view of the matter; although there was no lack of such opinions from the most influential of those who stood immediately about his person. Even his morganatic consort, the Countess Doehnhoff was opposed to the war, because the worthlessness of the enemy promised no very honourable laurels. Of still greater weight, however, was the influence of that powerful party, which was not able to follow the rapid transition of the King from the long-accustomed opposition to Austria to the adoption of an Austrian Alliance. This party had a representative in Prince Henry; who, though for the moment thrown into the background, was still a person of the greatest weight, and in whom, after the death of the great King, the glory and the policy of the Seven years war seemed to be embodied. The views of this party were, moreover, entertained by almost all the higher and older officers in the army; and above all it reckoned amongst its adherents the general for whom the chief command in the revolutionary war was destined—Duke Charles William Ferdinand of Brunswick.

The Duke passed at this period without question for the greatest military genius in Europe; and, indeed, even now,

posterity will not deny him the possession of many of the highest qualifications for command.[1] Those who saw him at this period, at his little Court at Brunswick, were astonished to find in the champion of Crefeld and Minden, and the renowned conqueror of Holland, a careful Paterfamilias, a zealous partaker and patron of every kind of intellectual progress, and an active and unpretending administrator.[2] At his accession his dominions were burdened with a debt of 7 million dollars, four of which he paid off in eleven years.[3] It is true that his financial system was somewhat niggardly, and injured in some degree the future prospects of the country, by cutting off even the most necessary expenditure.[4] But he gained the greater credit by imposing no smaller privations on himself than on the State, and by keeping up, notwithstanding all his fame as a General, a very small army. When, in 1790, he crowned all by relieving his people from all extraordinary taxation, he became the most popular monarch in the German Empire. On the Duke of Brunswick himself alone the narrowness of his circumstances exercised an unfavourable influence. His was one of those natures, which, notwithstanding their great intellectual gifts and pure morality, are wanting in that strength of will and lofty courage which are essential to every noble deed. He possessed more perseverance than power, more caution than sharpsightedness, more receptivity than creative genius. Endowed

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[1] For the following we have chiefly used the unpublished correspondence of Duke Frederick of Brunswick-Oels in the Weimar library. — [2] Correspondence of Johannes von Müller. — [3] From the minutes, especially of the Exchequer. A thoroughly correct view of these matters is given in the Political Journal of 1781, p. 97. It is well to bring forward this statement, which dates eleven years before the revolutionary war, because the fable still finds believers, which sees in this liquidation of debt a proof of the bribery of the Duke by Dumouriez. — [4] Saving was his only expedient; the American subsidies make but little show in the liquidation of debt, which continued to be carried on slowly and steadily after 1792. No great progress, however, was made *after* the campaign.

with great penetration and power of observation, he often overlooked in his multitudinous studies, the simple, the essential, and that which lay close at hand. He loved too much to look at every side of a subject, and formed the habit, most questionable in a soldier, of recognising the relative claims of an opponent—of giving too great prominence to the difficulties of every undertaking, and the weak points of every plan. As a natural consequence of this disposition he was extremely unwilling to express a definite opinion, and liked better to hint at a measure, than openly to adopt and carry it out. Almost involuntarily, he always preferred concealed and unobserved modes of operation. He was perfectly conscious of his own weakness, as indeed such natures are formed for self-criticism and self-torment. "I cannot resist it," he used to say; "it is stronger than I am."[1] When met by opposition he became incapable of standing his ground, even against the narrowest and most one-sided views, if they were but maintained with warmth and decision. He was angry indeed with his opponent, and doubly so with himself, for not being able to maintain the right—but he unvariably yielded in every point. And what made the matter worse, he could not, once for all, entirely give up his own opinion; but partly from self-love, and partly from a sense of duty, he ingeniously enough returned to the course which he had abandoned, and in this way, not unfrequently, incurred the suspicion of double-dealing.

We may easily understand that such a character could not be improved by eleven years' manœuvering in the ruined affairs of the Brunswick household; and still more fatal to him was the prevailing tone of the Court of Berlin. Under the two last kings, Prussia had received such a thoroughly monarchical stamp, that no department of public business was well conducted without the personal and uninterrupted cooperation of the Monarch himself. But this impulse from the

[1] Malmesbury's diaries, Dec. 7. 1794: *Cela est plus fort que moi.*

highest Power of the Land had been wanting since the accession of Frederic William II. This King, however active his benevolence, and lively his intellect, was by no means fond of labour, and was only too much inclined to yield to passing moods and impulses—a disposition which in a State like that of Prussia was sufficient to bring the Government in a few years almost to dissolution. The Court parties obtained an influence in political affairs, and the Royal decrees were no longer the offspring of one guiding will, but the resultant of opposing forces acting upon the mind of the Ruler. No wonder then that indecision and confusion spread widely on every side. We have already seen how much the State had lost its influence in Europe. "How striking," said Count Goltz in 1791, "is the difference between the uncertain and complex course of our present policy, and the firm, decided and energetic conduct, by which Prussia formerly acquired the respect and esteem of every Power!" In Home affairs it was remarked that the wholesome separation of one department of business from another had disappeared with the all-controlling and uniting spirit which had formerly pervaded them; and that every body concerned himself about every thing, as it suited his personal interest or his favourite theories. The Officers interfered in Church matters, and the Theologians in political affairs; the Diplomatists lectured the Generals, and the Generals felt themselves called upon to give their opinion on foreign affairs; a state of things by which each and all were necessarily injured, and which gave the country an Administration affecting piety, a bureaucratic Church, and a political Army.

Unconsciously the ruling powers had fallen upon courses by which every thing would inevitably be lost, that had hitherto constituted the traditional excellence of the Prussian State—vigorous government—care for the general weal—free development of mind, and a national policy. The dalliance with rosaries and spiritualism at the Court, of which so much was heard, was not the cause, but the expression of this

state of things. We need say nothing of the love affairs of the King, because, in spite of all his weakness, he did not easily allow female influence to direct him in any of the weightier questions of State. The venality of the higher officials of this period has also been greatly exaggerated. It is true that in the private documents of the Revolutionary times, mention is often made of gigantic attempts to corrupt, but also, with few exceptions, *of their failure. It was not* the secret crimes of Ministers, nor the dark intrigues of mistresses, nor any single weakness of the King, which worked ruin to the State of Frederick the Great, but the discord which existed between the fundamental principle of the Constitution and the general character of the Monarch. Prussia, as a purely military State, ought to have had a born general for its head; but Frederic William needed the firm guidance and support of a well developed constitutional system. He could not even control himself, and the country over which he had exclusive power must inevitably fall.

On this quaking and unsteady ground, a person of the Duke of Brunswick's character now found himself incessantly called upon not only to play the part of General, but of party leader—a task which he must continually have despaired of accomplishing, and therefore yielded more and more to his natural love of intrigue. The direction which the Foreign policy was taking grew daily more repugnant to him, and yet he had neither heart to oppose the King by a clear expression of opinion, nor strength sufficient, either entirely to withdraw from playing a part in the game himself, or to assume the position of a subordinate officer to a superior in command. He detested the very idea of a war with France; not however that he had any predilection for the Revolution, which just now offered him the chief command of the French army, or that the military power of the French Empire seemed formidable to him at this time. On the contrary, it was at this juncture of affairs that he

wrote to a friend:[1] "I cannot conceive from what source the French are to get money, since all the tax-payers in their kingdom are under arms, and the tax-gatherers alone are exempted from military service." While his compeers, without one exception, despised the Revolution, and believed that—the frontier once passed—they would have to deal with mere bands of robbers led by pettifogging lawyers, he, on the contrary, anticipated all that was violent and horrible, as soon as an irruption was made into the boiling crater itself.

"Our other complications," he wrote to the Prince of Oels in May, "will unravel themselves, but would to Heaven we had done with these French devils." Strange, indeed, that at the commencement of a war which was to fill the world, the leaders on either side should feel nothing but their own weakness and the strength of their opponents! Lafayette had no less apprehension of the Prussian armies than the Prussian Generalissimo of the Demon of Revolution!

These sentiments of the Duke were strengthened by political considerations. He entertained an equal dislike towards the Emigrés[2] and the Austrians, and for similar reasons. In the eyes of a Prince whose whole existence was centred in care for his country's weal, they were both equally representatives of all those mediæval abuses which in France had caused the Revolution, and in Germany had rendered all progress slow and difficult. It was with the deepest vexation that he received, on February the 13th, the royal command to repair to Potsdam, for the purpose of drawing up the plan of a campaign in aid of Austria and the Emigrés. He anticipated nothing but mischief from such a proceeding—mischief should Prussia be defeated by the irritated Revolutionists—and mischief should the power of her hereditary enemy—the House of Lorraine—be doubled by Prussian victories. Yet he accepted the commission, attended the

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[1] Schlieffen's *Denkwürdigkeiten.* — [2] The correspondence of his Privy Councellor, Feronce, is filled with expressions of this sentiment.

conference in presence of the King, and on the 19th despatched the desired plan for the campaign, for which Major Count Tauenzien had furnished the materials.[1] "It is," he says in the beginning of his *exposé*, "entirely the work of the King, whose ideas I am merely expressing." But we easily divine that the very contrary of this statement is true, when he proceeds to say, that far greater exertions than were contemplated would have been necessary, had not the French army been so demoralised. "Under existing circumstances indeed," he hastens to add, "no serious resistance is to be apprehended;" a statement which he again modifies by suggesting that it was not advisable to flatter themselves with the representations of the Emigrés, but to hold fast the conviction that all possible exertions should forthwith be made, all delays avoided, and the desired consummation brought about as speedily as possible; "for" said he, it is impossible to calculate beforehand the turn which events may take, and those who bear the sway in France are capable of resorting to any extreme."

Meantime, whether they considered the war easy or difficult, when once the National Assembly had thrown down the gauntlet by the decree of the 20th April, it behoved the German Powers to consider how the danger was most speedily to be met; and in the beginning of May, therefore, Hohenlohe-Kirchberg came to Sanssouci to consult the Prussian Generals on their common operations. In accordance with the zealous sentiments of the King, it was already determined that a grand invasion of France was to be attempted. As regarded the details of execution, the plan of the Duke was always taken as the basis of their consultations.[2] According to this, a Prussian army—42,000 strong—was to make the main attack by way of Luxembourg,

[1] This officer signed the original draught, from which the completed plan (printed by Massenbach) differs but little. — [2] The following is taken from the minutes of the Conference. *Conf.* Minutoli, *Erinnerungen*, p. 22.

and after taking Longwy and Montmedy, secure the passage of the Meuse by the capture of Verdun. The Austrians in Belgium, whose strength Hohenlohe estimated at 56,000 men, were to sendone corps to join the Prussians, while the latter were still in the Luxembourg territory, and place another at Ath to cover Brussels, and after taking, or alarming, Maubeuge, Philippeville and Givet with their main army, push up the Meuse and unite with the Prussians on the banks of that river;—on the crossing of which the subsequent fortune of the campaign would depend. According to the lists brought forward, Austria had at this moment only 11,000 men in the Breisgau; but 16,000 were already on the march, and 23,000 were ordered to follow with all speed. It was agreed that these last should be led directly to Mannheim, and by their operations on the Saar and the upper Moselle support the movements of the grand army. For the defence of the communications and the siege of the fortresses they reckoned on a Hessian corps. And lastly, the French Emigrés were to assemble at the first commencement of hostilities at Philippsburg, cross the Rhine at Basle, and in conjunction with Swiss forces, as was hoped, make a diversion either towards Upper Alsace, or towards the County Palatine of Burgundy. This plan would take them entirely away from the scene of the decisive movements; and we here see how the old aversion of the Court of Vienna for the Emigrés found a representative, on the Prussian side, in the Duke of Brunswick. Lastly, it was resolved emphatically to summon the sovereigns of the Empire to raise and arm troops, and thereby strengthen the main army, or assist in covering the Upper Rhine.

If we survey these forces, we shall see that Belgium seems completely secured; since the French, in expectation of a German invasion, could hardly throw more than 60,000 men into that province; to meet which force 56,000 imperialists would suffice until the arrival of the Duke of Brunswick. It was not consistent therefore with this statement of num-

bers, that Hohenlohe urged the immediate despatch of a Prussian Corps to Belgium. Prussia refused this request,[1] on the ground that the main attack, which would at once set Belgium free, must not be weakened.

In this most important operation the German powers hoped to employ 42,000 Prussians, 23,000 Austrians from the Breisgau, about 6,000 Hessians, and, lastly, the Belgian-Austrians, besides the corps posted at Ath for the protection of Brussels. For this last purpose 16,000 men would be more than sufficient, when once the Allies had occupied the line of the Meuse; 40,000 men, therefore, could be spared to increase the army of invasion, which would thus be raised to the strength of 111,000 men. We may regard this, under the existing circumstances, as the minimum required for an invasion of Paris. The Duke of Brunswick indeed expected no great results from its operations and was indignant that he had not been consulted about the "*whether*," but only about the "*how*"; and declared that while the French were burning with rage, he should be freezing in *ennui*, which was all that he expected to get out of the matter.[2] It was all the more urgently necessary at any rate not to leave the enemy any time for preparations, and above all not to give the Republicans the opportunity of entirely crushing the royalist and moderate parties in Paris. Prussia could have assembled its troops in Coblentz before the end of June—they began their march in five columns at the beginning of this month[3]—but Hohenlohe chose to declare that the 16,000 Austrians destined to protect the Upper Rhine could not reach Freiburg before the end of June, while the 23,000 who were to join the main army could not be in Mannheim before the end of July. Everything therefore was deferred to that period, and meanwhile it was determined that the coro-

[1] July 14th. — [2] To the Prince of Oels. — [3] Stranz, in the *Zeitschrift &c. des Krieges*, XXII. 18.

nation of the Emperor Francis might be leisurely celebrated in Germany, and the dilatory States of the Empire urged to take up arms. The melancholy consequences produced in France by this procrastination we have already seen, and shall have to observe more closely.

The intelligence received from the German Empire afforded no better hopes of accelerated and energetic action. In answer to the very urgent note which Austria and Prussia submitted to the German Diet, Hanover, with the consent of most of the Powers of Northern Germany, declared that she saw no reason to interfere in a war between France and Hungary; that in the event of a violation of the German territory, and a formal declaration of war by the Empire, she would furnish her contingent. It was not particularly wise, in the face of the well-known plans of the Jacobins, to lay so much stress on these formalities; Hanover, however, could at any rate urge that she was simply adhering to the ground which she had always taken. All the more undisguised was the selfishness, indolence and cowardice, which showed themselves among the petty Estates of the Suabian, Franconian and Rhenish Circles; among the very same Ecclesiastics and Potentates who, in the preceding year, had called so loudly for the chastisement of the insolent Jacobins. The Circle of Suabia, after lengthy discussions, conceived the sublime idea of suggesting the formation of a loose association for mutual defence, by which no one was to be bound!—and Franconia had the greatest apprehensions of dearth and famine arising from the mere passage of a Prussian Corps through the country, even were all its requirements to be paid for in ready money. The Ecclesiastical Electors contented themselves with rude treatment of the French *Chargés d'Affaires* at their respective courts, and with threatening proclamations against those of their subjects who might betray any weakness towards Jacobinism. The Bavarian Palatinate, again, whose armed force was in a pitiable condition,

zealously assured the Parisian Rulers of their neutrality and goodwill.[1]

The only exception to the spectacle of universal listlessness was afforded by William, Landgrave of Hesse-Cassel. This Prince governed his country in the manner of a strict father of a family, or zealous martinet,—following the principles of Frederick the Great in respect to order and discipline, parsimony and military organisation, but without any of that feeling for mental independence and culture which so peculiarly distinguished the government of the great Prussian Monarch. The State in Hesse Cassel was completely merged in the army. With a population of 400,000, a military force of about 14,000 men was kept up,[2] which, in thorough fitness for service, was not inferior to any troops in Europe. The Landgrave, who entertained the loftiest notions of his sovereign dignity, and whose self-consciousness was enhanced by the possession of such a force, had long been animated by the wish to obtain the Electoral dignity for his dynasty. His ambition had not hitherto been favoured by fortune, and he was rejoiced at the opportunity now afforded him of obliging equally the two most powerful Potentates of Germany. He had already frequently manifested his abhorrence of the Revolution. In September 1791 he sent secret orders to his Colonels, that on the very slightest disturbance, without any regard to the civil authorities, they should fire on the people without mercy until all was quiet. When the Elector of Mayence, a few months later, proposed to him to publish a warning manifesto in Hesse-Cassel also, against domestic Jacobins, he replied; "My subjects have in all times distinguished themselves by their attachment to their sovereign, and would only feel insulted by such an admonition, issued without any adequate motive."

[1] Correspondence of the French army of the Rhine. Biron is loud in his praises when he speaks of Bavaria. — [2] By means of an impost, or contribution, of 40,000 Thalers, and a military fund of 11 to 12 millions.

He likewise repudiated the proposal of an Imperial edict against revolutionary movements, on the ground that the internal police must be left in the hands of the respective sovereigns; and that in Hesse-Cassel, especially, all necessary measures in this respect had been taken long ago. But he declared himself ready to aid both his own Circle and the Empire with a military force far exceeding the proper contingent.[1] He had subsequently the satisfaction of knowing that Austria and Prussia expressly mentioned him to the Imperial Diet, as the only patriotic Prince; and he then, without further scruple, sent the lists of his troops to the Duke of Brunswick for the arrangement of operations. Yet, as a prudent manager, he did not at first by any means rest satisfied with empty honours, whether of the Electoral hat, or the laurel crown; so that a month's correspondence was carried on respecting expenses and compensation. The Landgrave demanded that Prussia should undertake the maintenance of the Hessian troops; that the Emperor and the King should give their votes for raising him to the Electoral dignity, and in the event of the Duke of Brunswick's retirement, transfer to him the command-in-chief of the whole allied army. It was evident that these conditions could not be carried out, and it was at last agreed, on the 31st of July,[2] that Hesse-Cassel should furnish, and herself maintain, 6,000 men for the campaign, in consideration of a promise of the Electoral hat and fair compensation.

If we review these negotiations we shall see that they afforded a sorry prospect of a fortunate issue to the campaign. The commander-in-chief was heartily averse to the

[1] From official documents given at length in a work of great research, unfortunately not yet published: "The Hessians in Champagne, on the Main and the Rhine;" by Von Ditfurth. — [2] This is the date of the Hessian ratification. The draft made by Prussia is of the 12th of July. The Landgrave wrote his wishes with his own hand as marginal notes, and concludes: *L'on se remet uniquement aux promesses gracieuses de S. M. l'Empereur et de S. M. Prussienne.*

whole undertaking, many of those who were directly interested could not be shaken from the most complete torpor, and the armaments of the chief Power were not sufficiently advanced to be used at the most favourable moment.

But what was still worse, the fundamental condition of success—a real understanding between Austria and Prussia—became every day more difficult of consummation. When once the King of Prussia had fixed his regards on a compensation in Poland, he naturally endeavoured to enter into close relations with Russia; and Austria, with ill-concealed jealousy, soon followed his example. We shall subsequently have to watch the developement of this affair in St. Petersburg in all its details; we will only observe, in this place, that it afforded Russia the opportunity of exercising a direct influence on the French war also, and that the entanglement of different interests was rendered still more complicated. While Austria would have preferred to exclude the Emigrés from every kind of cooperation, whether political or military, Russia, on the contrary, demanded that the Powers should officially place the French Princes at the head of the whole undertaking, and only come forward as enemies to the Revolution in *their* train. It was at last agreed, by the mediation of Prussia, not to assign any political part to the Emigrés, but a subordinate military cooperation. In like manner Russia pointed out the re-establishment of the Bourbon throne as the exclusive object of the whole war, and therefore protested against any dismemberment of the French Empire. Prussia, on her part, had little objection to make; in Vienna the Government evaded any formal renunciation, but all the more pointedly put the question,—from what other quarter, then, the proposed compensation for Prussia was to come? The Russian armies were at that time in full march towards Poland, and the rapid subjection of that unhappy country was to be looked for immediately. Although Prussia very much disliked these one-sided and arbitrary measures of the Russians before the conclusion of the proposed treaty,

she had no means at hand of frustrating them; on the contrary, Schulenburg now communicated to Prince Reuss that Prussia intended to look for her compensation in Poland. The effect which this announcement produced in Vienna clearly shewed, that since the death of Leopold a new spirit reigned in the imperial palace—that all breadth of view in that quarter was lost, and that a restless greed had taken its place. The same great interests of State which had made Prussia hostile to Poland had raised up Austria as her protector; and Leopold had made this principle the very focus of his entire policy. The motive which influenced the son was the thought that though the aggrandizement of Prussia was by no means pleasant, the new turn of affairs would not be unacceptable, if Austria also obtained thereby a province in Poland.[1] But the necessity soon arose of looking about for other propositions. The Empress Catharine, who, by means of the negotiations already referred to, had completely attained her object of diverting the German Powers from affording any aid to Poland, regarded herself as mistress of the whole Republic. She was not at all inclined to give up a portion of her booty to a third competitor; and least of all did she wish to concede such an extension of territory to Austria, which had so lately cherished the most dangerous plans for the restoration of Poland. Neither in St. Petersburg, therefore, nor in Berlin, did the negotiations make any progress. In expectation of subsequently coming to a good understanding, the Austrian Government began its military preparations and the movement of troops; and arranged a personal meeting in Mayence, between the King of Prussia and Francis II., for July, immediately after the assumption of the Imperial crown by the latter. The nearer the time approached, the more restlessly did the

[1] Such a feeling showed itself in Vienna as early as the end of March, immediately after the Prussian rejection of Spielmann's memorial, and the warlike manifestations of Dumouriez.

Court of Vienna look about for some tract of land which they might lay claim to as a suitable set-off to Prussia's acquisition in Poland. In this state of suspense Baron Spielmann one day received the Russian Ambassador Rasumowsky, and talked with him on the all-absorbing subject of the day. The Russian suggested that Austria could not do better than return to the old plan of Joseph II., of exchanging Belgium for Bavaria. Spielmann, who perfectly appreciated the advantages of such a rounding-off of the Austrian territory, expressed strong doubts whether the circumstances were favourable to such a scheme; to which Rasumowsky replied, that the only obstacle, on which Joseph had been wrecked, —the opposition of Prussia—was done away with by the alliance of the two Powers, and that, consequently, success was to be regarded as easy of attainment. "In that case," replied Spielmann, with a view of sounding the intentions of Russia, "Prussia will demand an acquisition of equal value for herself." "No doubt," said Rasumowsky in conclusion, "and this will certainly be found." The word Poland was not mentioned by either of those Statesmen, just as Goltz at St. Petersburg had made no express mention of a partition; but all parties understood one another, and Spielmann hastened to urge Prince Reuss to a confidential discussion of the new idea in Berlin. Almost contrary to his expectation he found a very ready hearing from Schulenburg;[1] the Prussian Minister declared with the greatest precision and frankness that his royal master would agree to the Bavarian exchange, without any hesitation, if he former a Polish province of proportionate extent. These words were sufficient to clear the atmosphere at the Court of Vienna, and to put an end to the previous stagnation. The former aversion to the extension of the Prussian dominions into

[1] Alvensleben even asserts in a later memorial that the memorial proceeded from Schulenburg himself. He was however, at that period, very much irritated with a former colleague; and he himself signed several despatches in 1792, which give the above account of the proceedings.

Poland was so thoughly cured, that Austria herself undertook to break the ice in St. Petersburg, and officially to propose to Catharine the Bavarian exchange for the Emperor, and the acquisition of a Polish province for Prussia. The Russian Empress received this communication with inward satisfaction; she could not do otherwise than welcome the thorough change which the policy of Austria had undergone. She saw in the plan of the Bavarian exchange a fruitful source of endless complications to the German Powers, during which she herself could take up a commanding position; and she had from the very first, as we have seen, made up her mind to sacrifice some portion or other of Polish territory to the Germans. At present, however, she had possession of the whole country, and was determined, if she must make a sacrifice, that it should it be as small as possible. Her Ministers, therefore, listened with the greatest coldness to the proposition of the Austrian Ambassador. The Bavarian exchange, they said, might have been effected even without a partition of Poland, but the French Revolution had, they allowed, so completely changed the general position of affairs, that a compensation must be sought for Prussia. Ostermann added that the case demanded the most serious deliberation—and the State-Councillor, Markoff, was of opinion that half a campaign against France hardly entitled Prussia to an increase of power, especially as Austria after all gained nothing in extent of territory by the Bavarian exchange. They therefore adjourned the discussion, and declared that they must await the result of the personal conference between the two monarchs.

Meanwhile King Francis had gone to Frankfort, where his coronation as Emperor was celebrated, according to the old established forms, on the 14th of July. The King of Prussia set out at the same time to join his army, whose columns were collecting at Coblentz for the invasion of France; and on the 19th, 20th and 21st the Conference previously agreed upon between the two High and Mighty

Allies took place at Mayence. Illustrious and distinguished men were gathered together in the same city from all parts of the Empire. A large number of the Princes of the Empire made their appearance, attended by splendid retinues; prelates and officers of every uniform jostled one another, and the ancient city was enlivened by the presence of 10,000 strangers. In the castle of the easy Prince of the Church, the festive music was continually summoning the guests to banquet, concert and ball; and in the evenings the Rhine reflected on its broad surface the most brilliant illuminations. In short, it seemed as if the ancient Empire wished once more, before the commencement of its death-struggle, to display on its original and classic soil all the remains of its old magnificence. Amidst the tumult of festivities the diplomatists Spielmann and Cobenzl, Schulenburg and Haugwitz, met together for the decisive negotiation. At first their harmony seemed to be complete; it was agreed that the compensation of both parties ought to be equal,—that there was no ground for seeking that compensation in France itself, but that on the contrary, it ought to consist, for Austria in the Bavarian-Belgian exchange, and for Prussia in a Polish province. When asked to what extent of territory Prussia would lay claim, Schulenburg designated the Palatinates of Posen, Gnesen, Kalisch, Kujavia, and a portion of Sieradia as far as the Warthe, which are about equivalent to the present Prussian province of Posen. Hereupon the Imperial negotiators brought forward an entirely new and unexpected demand. They now represented,—as Markoff had already done in St. Petersburg,—that the exchange of Belgium for Bavaria brought no increase of territory to the Emperor at all equivalent to what Prussia gained; and therefore demanded that, in the event of the exchange taking place, the King of Prussia should add his Franconian principalities of Anspach and Baireuth to the Austrian share. We may judge of the indignation with which the King rejected this proposal; but as the Emperor insisted on it with

equal obstinacy, no course was left but to break off the whole discussion, and to commence the war without any positive agreement; in the hope that a more favourable moment might bring better counsels with it.

And thus the leading Powers of Europe stood on the very brink of a conflict—the shock of which was to sever two eras of the world from one another—without the slightest foreboding of the importance of the task before them, and without any other feeling than selfish anxiety, and bitter jealousy towards their associates. What a change had taken place in Prussian policy from the clearness, sagacity and firmness of Frederick the Great!—What a revolution in the principles of Austrian state-craft, which three months before, had advocated the glorious re-establishment of Poland, and was now the first to propose its partition! What could be expected of a war against the Revolution, and in favour of ancient rights and privileges, the cost of which was to be borne by the ancient Polish Republic, and by the old Roman Empire, in the person of the Bavarian Elector?—What could be effected by an alliance, the parties to which were considering above all things how they might deprive their associates of their desired share in the booty? They fell, not before the arms of the Revolution, but by their own flagrant sin; "*Quem Deus vult perdere, prius dementat.*"

Another and hardly less important negotiation—which was likewise carried on in Mayence—led to an equally unsatisfactory result. It was conducted in the greatest secrecy by a plain untitled man, who was but little remarked amidst the gaily attired and glittering throng which crowded round the monarchs—*viz.* Mallet du Pan, the Envoy of Louis XVI. After the Monarchs had given him a very gracious reception, he had long conferences with Cobenzl and Haugwitz. In these the well-known wishes of Louis XVI. were discussed—that the Powers should confine themselves to complaints of the breach of international law; should not enter into any negotiations with the liberated King; and leave to

him the entire arrangement of internal affairs. Both statesmen expressed their assent to these conditions. They disclaimed, in the first place, all intentions of aggrandizement at the expense of France. "They gave me," said Mallet, "full security on this point;" he was sharpsighted enough not to overlook the most certain guarantee for their sincerity—the deep hatred which the two Courts entertained towards each other. These conferences, moreover, gave the death-blow to the declining authority of the Emigrés. High as they had stood in the favour of the Court of Berlin, they had greatly lessened, even there, the sympathy which had been felt for them, by their excessive pretensions, their complicated intrigues, and above all their internal discord. There existed at this time three parties among them, which were at deadly feud with one another. The chief influence over the Comte d'Artois was still exercised by Calonne, who had lately given great offence in the Tuileries by his plan of proclaiming the Comte de Provence regent of France. Mallet too had been thwarted by them in every possible way in the execution of his mission; but he had now the satisfaction of seeing the Powers thoroughly exasperated against them. "Where," asked Cobenzl, "after all their boasting, are their arms?—What use can we make of them?—and how will their cooperation help us?" "They wish," added Haugwitz, "to restore the *ancien régime*, though the great majority of the French people are bitterly opposed to it." Mallet strongly confirmed these sentiments, and when he repeatedly called their attention to the contrast between the system of Calonne and that of Louis XVI., and pointed out the evil consequences of the former, Cobenzl replied by declaring that the Powers took precisely the same view of the matter.[1]

It was therefore resolved, on the 20th of July, not to allow the Emigrés to unite any where in large numbers, that their political importance might be thoroughly destroyed. Not

[1] *Vid.* the official documents in the 1st Vol. of Mallet's *Mémoires*,

more than 8,000 were to march with the Duke of Brunswick —not more than 5,000 were to join the Austrians in the Breisgau—not more than 4,000 the Imperial troops in Belgium. Bread and forage were to be given them, and their Princes were to receive 200,000 florins for their equipment. This, as was stated in the agreement, was to be irrevocably the last payment; if the Princes refused these conditions, they were to be entirely and publicly abandoned to their fate. The petty Court at Coblenz, which was immediately informed on these points, received the message with impotent bitterness of heart. It was not only selfish reasons which excited the wrath of these cavaliers; beneath all their vexation, that the good old times were not to be restored, lay national pride, wounded by the thought that the foreigners, whom in their hearts they despised, were to play the chief part, instead of subordinating themselves in a fitting manner to the descendants of St. Louis. The national feeling stirred the hearts of Frenchmen at Coblentz as well as Paris; and it had been remarked that after Biron's defeat at Mons, the old noblemen wept over the ill-fortune of their revolutionary countrymen.[1] The worst thing was, that Louis XVI. himself had led the way in degrading his Brothers; they could only ascribe it to the influence of Marie Antoinette, the foreigner, the "Austrian;" and thus these champions of the feudal throne joined in the abuse which the Jacobins heaped upon her head. This fury against strangers from whom they were begging aid, and against the Queen, for whose deliverance they were marching, was never extinguished; and has diffused as many lies through the historical literature of the period, as the party hatred of the Revolutionists themselves.[2]

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[1] Stramberg's *Coblenz*, from contemporaneous notices. — [2] To this category belongs more especially Michaud's fiction concerning the campaign in Champagne (Biogr. univ., suppl., art. Dumouriez, etc.) which has unhappily been brought into Germany by the learned but scandal-loving Rhenish *Antiquarius*, while in France it met with due chastisement in the *Spectateur Militaire*, XXXIII.

Mallet urgently advocated the publication of a manifesto, by which the character of the war might be solemnly placed before the French people. He called for heavy threats against the Jacobins, and tranquillizing assurances to the peaceable portion of the population;—the former to do away with the incredible security of the Parisian public in respect to the war;—the latter to separate the mass of the people from the factions. On this account he thought that no particular form of government should be prescribed, but only freedom for Louis XVI., as the sole reformer and peace-maker. It would evidently not have been wise, in the general insecurity, to have anticipated particular constitutional paragraphs; nevertheless it cannot be denied that there is a very essential defect in Mallet's propositions. He agreed with the two Ministers, that the Germans should not seek any acquisition of French territory, and that the restoration of Feudalism should not be aimed at. As regards the object of the manifesto, one of these assurances was evidently just as important and practicable as the other; but unfortunately only one of them was mentioned in Mallet's project. And yet there was no doubt that as many French hearts were boiling with indignation at the remembrance of the *ancien régime*, as at the idea of a foreign yoke; and the abolition of the former might easily be completed, without the heedless anticipation of any particular form of Constitution. There were three principal points, which had nothing at all to do with the Constitution—in the narrower sense of the word—or with the prerogatives of the King;—three points, the importance of which had long ago been recognised by Louis XVI., and were of the most vital moment to the welfare of the vast majority of the people. These were: access to offices and honours for all classes—abolition of feudal rights and Church tithes. We have noticed above what an important influence these questions exercised on the political and warlike feelings of the nation; nothing therefore was so essential as to deprive the war of

its revolutionary sting, by an unequivocal declaration on these three cardinal points.

Unfortunately, however, Mallet's plan fell into the hands of a zealous Emigré, the Marquis Limon, who drew up a manifesto, partly founded on Mallet's proposals; and succeeded in gaining the approbation of the Emperor Francis.[1] Instead of an additional clause against Feudalism, the document only contained still more unmeasured threats, the undignified nature of which could only irritate without intimidating. The Duke of Brunswick had not the energy to oppose his scruples to the will of the Monarchs, and signed the manifesto on the 25th of July. We have already seen the effect which it produced.

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[1] Mallet. Schulenburg was subsequently won over, and through him the King.

CHAPTER II.

RULE OF THE MUNICIPALITY OF PARIS.

FEELING OF THE COUNTRY.—FLIGHT OF LAFAYETTE.—MOB RULE IN PARIS.—POLICE OF THE SECTIONS.—ENCROACHMENTS OF THE MUNICIPALITY.—REVOLUTIONARY TRIBUNAL.—ARMING OF THE PROLETARIES.—CONFISCATION AND PLUNDER.—RESISTANCE OF THE CITIZENS.—MURDEROUS PLANS.—DESIRE OF INFLUENCING THE ELECTIONS TO THE CONVENTION.—FRUITLESS RESISTANCE OF THE GIRONDE.

SUCH was the point at which the sluggish and complicated movements of old Europe had arrived, when the outbreak occurred in Paris, which destroyed both the Monarchy and the Constitution of 1791. Those who caused it had to sustain a contest for life and death with the whole of Europe, and to transform their country into one vast camp. For the time, however, the position of affairs, convulsed by the unchaining of every passion, was one of constant and uncertain fluctuation. Outside the walls of the capital no one knew what course the victorious Revolution would take. The victors themselves were especially doubtful what the country might say to the catastrophe of the 10th of August. The cries of the different parties in all the provinces were so confused and discordant, that the most unlooked-for and improbable events seemed possible. The first care of the National Assembly was to secure the material organs of power; and as early as the 10th of August they sent off Commissioners to the armies to administer the oath of fidelity. On the 13th they issued a manifesto to the nation, pointing out the necessity of the revolt, and calling upon the people to provide for their own future, by means of a National Convention.

Neither the secret instructions given to the Commissioners, nor the language of the public proclamations, show any great confidence of success. Condorcet, the author of the address to the nation, avoided the slighest allusion to a Republic. Nay, he did not even speak of General Lafayette, who had formed the chief subject of the last and most violent debate. This was highly politic; for the mass of the population felt not the slightest interest in vexed questions of this kind; and the majority of those who still engaged in political contests were as adverse to the overthrow of Louis XVI., as to the rule of the Parisian Municipality. But there were two feelings on which the country agreed—abhorrence of the *ancien régime*, and indignation at the interference of foreign countries. The whole future success of the ruling party depended on their suppressing for the time all minor differences of opinion, and making themselves the organs of these national feelings,—representing Louis as the accomplice of the allied Emigrés and Powers, and leaving the nation no other choice than between the 10th of August and utter slavery.

This error was already prevalent among the people. Wherever the Commissioners went, they found the minds of men excited, and the mass of the people in commotion. In all the Departments the cry for war was heard above the din of party strife. After the country had been declared to be in danger, volunteers flocked to the standards, gave in their names to the Communal Officers, and awaited their equipments and orders to march. In this respect there was no difference among the provinces, with the exception of a small district of Bretagne. The national feeling prevailed over every other, the Democrats wished to fight to preserve their liberties from the Prussians; and the friends of the Constitution submitted to the tyranny of the mob, in order not to throw obstacles in the way of the holy war against the foreigners. In Alsace a few days before the 10th, the whole population of Strasburg had signed a vigorous

address against the Jacobins—whose club in that city only numbered 500 members—but they had also equipped a new battalion for the defence of the frontier, and saw no possibility of carrying on the war, if they deserted the last rallying point—the National Assembly. From Orleans, the Departmental Authorities, the Municipality, and 600 citizens, had sent up addresses against the proceedings of the 20th of June; but in the beginning of August, they called on the young men to form free companies; on the 10th they bewailed the fate of the King, and at the same time sent out their recruits to fight against his deliverers. In Brest, Belval, the Procureur of the Department, before the news of the 10th arrived, declared that the deposition of the King would be not only highly dangerous, but pernicious in its consequences; "but," he added, "whether it be decreed or rejected, the National Assembly must still continue to be our common centre, or France must perish." These sentiments occur in hundreds of documents dating from this period; and they manifested themselves all the more strongly, because they were based both on the strength and the weakness of human nature, and afforded the citizens free scope for the indulgence of their patriotism against foreigners, while they relieved them from the dangerous task of opposing the Jacobins at home. All enthusiasm for a political ideal had been used up in the disorders of the Revolution. "We are free enough," cried some, "why should we excite ourselves any longer?" "We are much too free;" said others, "of what use are the rights of man, when every proletary can put his hand in every purse?" The Jacobins were perfectly aware of this feeling among the masses, and were rendered no little anxious thereby. "On the 10th of August," said a Girondist, "3,000 workmen changed France into a Republic." Another was of opinion that the great mass of the people were enthusiastic for the Constitution; that in the towns, a longing began to arise for the ancient despotism; and that people were only republican from fear of the guillotine. The Cor-

déliers bear the same testimony as the Gironde. The leading organ of the Jacobins at that time—"the Revolution of Paris"—acknowledged the correctness of the above statement. They ascribe it, indeed, to the intrigues of the Court and the wealthy, but they testify that the same persons who in 1789 had done every thing for the Revolution, were ready in 1792 to devote their powers to the King; and that this was the reason why the Duke of Brunswick no longer spoke of Counter-revolution, but only of the restoration of order. Four-fifths of the nation, probably, had no more ardent desire than to see a strong government restore the country to repose, and release the citizens from political labour. But on this very account they put up with a Jacobin government, because, if they opposed it, they must themselves come forward and risk their own persons. Even if the National Assembly had committed an illegal act in suspending the King, the resistance of individuals to a decree of the National Assembly was not exactly legal. There was no organized body in any part of the country, round which the royalists could rally; the only societies which at that time possessed life and power were the Clubs, and these were in the very front of the Revolution. In these there was zeal, energy and unity; the feud between the Gironde and the Mountain did not extend to the provinces, where all worked vigorously together for one object. The Constitutionalists, on the other hand, were at variance with the adherents of the orthodox priests, and full of distrust towards the foreign connexions of the King. All parties therefore resigned themselves to what they could not alter, and derived consolation from the thought that they should now meet the foreign enemy with united powers. From every quarter the National Assembly received intelligence that the country submitted to the Revolution, accepted the *fait accompli*, and was preparing to hold the election for the National Convention.[1]

[1] Mortimer-Ternaux, the writer of the greatest research among the French, comes to exactly the same result, after a comprehensive examination of

Under these circumstances the only quarter from which the Gironde, from the very first moment, apprehended danger, was the camp of General Lafayette. Countless eyes were directed towards him, "the eldest son of freedom," as he was called by his friends. His army was entirely devoted to him. He had long and irreconcilably broken off all connection with the Democrats. He received intelligence of the Revolution of the 10th in 36 hours;[1] first from a soldier of the National Guard who had escaped from the carnage, and then from an officer of his own army who, on the evening of the 10th, had forced his way through the *barrières*, pistol in hand. He was only a few marches distant from Paris—the Prussian army was still at Konz on the Moselle, on the other side of the frontier—he had therefore still a week before the Prussians could reach his position. Would it be possible to make use of these days for a coup de main against Paris! If he made his appearance there with only a few loyal regiments, the National Guard would in all probability rally round their old commander,[2] and after the vote of the 8th he was sure of a majority in the National Assembly. A few volleys fired on the Marseillois might perhaps suffice to restore the reins of government to constitutional hands. He would then be as sure of the approbation of the provinces, as the Revolution now was; for he too had the intention to oppose the Prussians, and to repel all foreign interference. It was an undertaking full of danger, in which the loss of an hour might expose him to defeat either from the factions or the Prussians. But there was no other way. Everything depended on the possession of the Capital—on energy and rapidity of action.

Such a proceeding was all the more urgently necessary, because he enjoyed the full confidence of the soldiers in his

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the official documents both of the National Assembly and the Departments. — [1] Lafayette, VI. 242. — [2] On the 28th of June he came to Paris without troops, and had, nevertheless, for the moment, a chance of gaining over the National Guard.

camp at Sedan; while in the other armies both the Gironde and the Mountain possessed very important adherents. The old dispute on the question of offensive or defensive war was not only not extinguished, but had been enhanced by the late party struggles. The Rhine army had been since the middle of July under the command of Generals Biron and Custine; the former was an old Orleanist, from the very first prepossessed against Lafayette, and the latter had staked all his hopes on the Revolution and the war; and both, long before the 10th of August, had placed themselves at the disposal of the most violent parties. We are already acquainted with the leader of the army of the South, General Montesquiou, and his friendly relation to the Gironde. His conscience was satisfied with having done his best to avert the late revolution, and he and his army now silently accepted the *fait accompli*. As the Gironde had their representative in this quarter, so the Mountain had one of still greater weight, with the army of the North, in Dumouriez. When Luckner left this army to go to Metz, Dumouriez was to follow with his division; but he took advantage of an unimportant reconnaissance which the Austrians made against Orchies to convince his immediate superior, General Arthur Dillon, of the danger of his departure, and remained in his former position in spite of orders. Just at this time Couthon, a friend of Robespierre, was staying at a bathing place in the Department du Nord. Dumouriez made friends with this man, on the ground of their common hatred of Lafayette, and in spite of the furious indignation of the Marshal, the Parisian Jacobins prevented the War Ministry from punishing the insubordination of Dumouriez. We shall see what dangers to France sprang from these machinations; but for the moment Dumouriez was a good Jacobin, and inspired his division with the purest democratic enthusiasm.

These circumstances could not remain unknown to Lafayette. If he retreated before such dangers, no one could accuse him of timidity; if he acted in a harsh and dictatorial

manner, no one could impute to him a criminal ambition. But being too self-complacent for the former course, and too indolent for the latter, he chose the most pernicious of all. He declared his wish to oppose the Jacobins, and at the same time sheathed his sword. He believed that he could not venture to leave his camp in the prospect of a Prussian invasion. He could never rise above the ideas of formal legality, although he was about to enter into a life and death struggle with those who had obtained their power in contempt of every law. His first thought was—not as to the choice of the regiments which might be most serviceable in an attack on the Parisian Sansculottes,—but under what Civil Authority he ought to place himself. For his wish was to defend the Constitution, and the Constitution declared that the armed force was always, by its very nature, bound to obey. He therefore awaited the orders of the People, at a moment when the People had no other prospect before them than to fall under the power of the quickest and strongest dictatorship. His intention was to unite the Directories of the Departments,—as the highest Civil Authorities—in a Congress, and to oppose this new representation of the People to the rebellious minority of the National Assembly. The Departments of the Northern frontier were ready to second this movement, and the Municipalities showed a lively interest in it. When Kersaint and his colleagues arrived in Sedan, and demanded the recognition of the 10th of August, the Town Council caused them to be arrested. The Directory of the Department then issued, at Lafayette's desire, a summons to all their Colleagues, and thereupon—instead of acting and carrying the country with them—they again waited to see what the country would say. Then they learned in quick succession, that each individual authority had submitted to the orders of the ruling power at Paris, and that all the Generals, some through fear, and others with enthusiasm, had acknowledged the 10th of August. None of the Departments made any sign; the People was silent; and

Lafayette said, "I have fought all my life for freedom; I cannot use my resources in bringing about a civil war and a military dictatorship." The captured Commissioners sent him word that it only depended on himself to take the lead of the new government.[1] Servan, the Minister, also made advances to him by letter, and promised him every assistance. But Lafayette well knew that a reconciliation in this quarter was impossible; and in fact this show of friendliness was only a snare, since the Ministry had already resolved, on the 14th, to deprive him of his command;[2] and on the 16th Servan sent off General Dumouriez's nomination as Commander of the army of the North, in the room of Lafayette. The troops of the latter, which in the first moment would have followed him any where,[3] were already worked upon by Jacobin missionaries, and rendered doubtful in their allegiance by the example of their comrades in Flanders. The proceedings in Sedan were well known in Paris; fresh Commissioners were despatched thither, and energetic measures prepared. Lafayette came to the conclusion that his further presence with the army could only bring danger to the country. All that he could do to keep the army in a good state of defence in spite of his absence, he did during the last hours before his departure. He gave his orders for the case of an unexpected attack; asked Luckner to undertake the chief command until further orders arrived; and on the evening of the 14th August left his head-quarters, intending to make his way through Belgium to the neutral ground of England. Three and twenty officers of different grades and nearly a thousand soldiers joined him.[4] In the same hour the National Assembly impeached him for high treason; on the following day he was arrested by the Austrians, and

[1] VI. 148. — [2] Mortimer-Ternaux, III. 50. — [3] Kersaint's report on the 28th. Even after Lafayette's departure some of the Corps stil respected and carried out his orders. Dumouriez's *Mémoires*; "two-thirds of the Army of Flanders are Fayettists." *Conf.* Beaulieu. — [4] Letter of Dampierre to the Nat. Convention, April 23, 1793.

on his refusing to give any information respecting the state of the French army, he was condemned to a long and severe imprisonment.

This first danger was thus averted from the heads of the Parisian democrats. France had submitted to them; they had now to establish their rule, obtained by a bold *coup de main*, and they were resolved to fulfil their task with unbounded zeal, and without scrupulousness as to means. The time for half-measures was gone, and the great object now was to follow out the ultimate consequences of the "rights of man." In the Hôtel de Ville at Paris,—where the real victors of the 10th sat in council,—they still spoke a good deal of freedom, and almost incessantly of equality; but among themselves, they made it no secret that their real object was, not to establish the rights of all, but the rule of the Proletaries, and through them of the Demagogues. They desired vengeance for the past, enjoyment for the present, and security for their future dominion. For the attainment of these objects they had now abundance of means—the powers and resources of the State—the organisation of the Clubs,—laws and arms—popular orators and banditti. Their whole system was comprised in one sentence, which some pronounced with statesmanlike coldness, others with glowing passion, and at last with cynical insensibility—"the annihilation of all opponents." By cutting down every one who differed from them they gained everything at once—revenge, booty, and secure dominion. If the enemies of freedom were assassinated, freedom was no longer exposed to dangers from without. Selfishness and fanaticism here played into each other's hands. The same men who raved about universal equality and popular sovereignty, thought it quite allowable to bend this sovereign people beneath the yoke of their own theories and desires. This was by no means the worship of mere numbers, but, on the contrary, nothing else than self-adoration—the same fanatical dogmatism with hich Charles Stuart declared every traitor to Heaven-de-

scended Royalty—and Cromwell's Puritans, every opponent of the Heaven-inspired Saints—worthy of death. "Every one," they said, "ought to be free, except the opponents of freedom." Every form of despotism finds its justification in this formula.

That with such sentiments the victors of August 10th would not long remain at peace with one another, was a matter of course. On the 11th Robespierre entered the Assembly of the Hotel de Ville, immediately acquired a predominant influence, and brought with him to the Commune all the fulness of his hatred and suspicion. He must have been astonished to be counted in this *entourage* among the more moderate members, at any rate in form. The real hero and prophet of the Municipality was Marat, who from this moment really begins his political career. The prohibition of all royalist and constitutional journals was one of the first measures of the new Government of freedom. Marat who without being chosen by any Section took a seat in the Municipality *proprio motu*, as "the friend of the People," appropriated four of the presses of the State printing establishment, and from that time became the official organ of the Revolutionary Commune. It is true that he did nothing but what he had already done for the last three years; he demanded that the freedom and prosperity of the Proletaries should be secured by the simple expedient of murdering the Reactionists, and confiscating their property. Nor did he gain any influence in fresh quarters. The other party chiefs, even of the Democrats, still considered him as half mad. But he occupied a higher position after the 10th August, because his adherents became the leading power in France, which no longer exerted an indirect influence, as heretofore, by the noise of the galleries, and the intimidation of the National Assembly, but took a direct part in the transaction of business, and set itself to reduce the civilization and habits of the nation to the level of the lowest Proletariate.

The National Assembly was considered in these circles

lukewarm and untrustworthy. A short time before the 10th August, Marat had proposed to take the Royal Family prisoners, but to decimate the Representatives of the People, as far worse traitors. Robespierrre attacked no one more violently than Lafayette, and hated none more furiously than the Girondists; under which two categories the whole Assembly was included. This body was allowed to exist for the present, because it was essential for the control of the Departments, but it was to be kept in strict obedience. To effect this the demagogues proceeded on the very concise theory, that the People in a state of insurrection exercises its sovereign rights *directly;* since the 10th of August, therefore, the National Assembly had lost its title.

The Girondists were perfectly aware of the existence of these views. As early as the 11th some of the leaders of the party proposed, in the Committee of Twelve, to pass a decree expressly confining the Municipality once more to civic business. But some of their colleagues were opposed to the motion, and others were afraid of the People, so that it never came before the Assembly at all. Nevertheless war was declared between the two rival powers.

Meanwhile decree after decree was passed at the Hôtel de Ville, with the view of securing and extending its authority in all directions. The first measure was the personal prosecution of the defeated parties. The most important of these were the King and his family. The Commune hastened to protest against his living in the Palace of Luxembourg, on the ground that they could not watch him there. They would not even allow the National Assembly to assign to him the Hôtel of the Minister of Justice, although he would there have been under the surveillance of Danton. They wished for the exclusive possession of this pledge, and above all they did not choose that the captives should be in even half decent custody, but in the close confinement of a common prison. The National Assembly yielded, delivered up the King to the Commune, and on the 13th had him con-

ducted to the tower of the old Temple. Next came incessant arrests of persons of all ranks and categories; and that no one might escape the *barrières* remained closed, and all passports were suspended. Formerly, the first charge against suspected persons was brought by the *juge de paix;* but now supervision, information and arrest, were all committed to the hands of the Sectional Assemblies, with the composition of which we have become sufficiently acquainted. To exercise the highest authority in such matters, the Municipality chose from their own number a *Comité de Surveillance*, consisting of 15 members, and gave likewise to several Commissioners unlimited power to imprison every suspected person. Lastly, they resolved that a list of all the opponents of the Revolution should be drawn up and laid before the Tribunals.

The National Assembly allowed these things to go on. The Gironde felt no pity for the King, and had themselves, through Gensonné, proposed to transfer the political police to the Town Councillors. But it was soon announced to the Assembly that the Municipality—which had already superseded the *Juges de paix*—had suspended the Committees of all the Sections, and the President and Council of the Department, on account of their hostility to freedom; *i.e.* they had abolished, by an act of self-assumed sovereignty, the perfectly independent local Authorities on the one side, and on the other, the superior Authorities to which they themselves owed obedience. The National Assembly replied by a decree, which, while it maintained the deposition of the previous members, ordered the renewal of the Departmental Council by an immediate election.

The wrath of the Hôtel de Ville was great; for in the path on which they had now entered, they wanted no superiors over their own heads. The existence of a higher authority would have rendered a certain amount of legality necessary, even if it were entirely filled with partisans, which, in the present temper of the burghers, was by no means certain to be the case. Until the capital had been

thoroughly intimidated no elections must be allowed; and the Jacobins at once resolved, that the Commune should protest against the decree, and support their petition with noisy arguments. Accordingly Robespierre at the head of a deputation appeared at the bar of the Assembly, to declare that the renewal of the Departmental government would be the germ of discord; that the Municipality was elected by the People, and must exercise the omnipotence of the sovereign; or the People, to preserve its sovereignty, would once more rouse itself to vengeance. The Girondists gnashed their teeth, but the galleries threatened, Danton's friends declared in favour of the petition, and a decree was passed confining the new Department to the business of assessing the taxes.

After this display of weakness, the Commune was secure of the continuance of its power. There was now nothing left to check its progress—nothing which it would allow to be beyond the sphere of its functions. The National Assembly had declared itself incompetent to abolish the Monarchy, and reserved such a constitutional change for the Convention; but the Commune entertained no such feeble scruples. It already dated its registers, "In the first year of the Republic;" and in order to shew the vanity of the idle hopes of the royalists, they ordered the destruction of all royal pictures, insignia and monuments in Paris. They interfered in the proceedings of the legal tribunals, and even sent orders to another Department to liberate the murderers of the Mayor of Etampes. They exercised a control in foreign affairs, by endeavouring to hinder the Ambassadors of Parma and Venice from leaving Paris, and even summoned them to be examined before their bar. On the 12th they declared to the National Assembly that the French People would never begin a war of conquest, but that they would certainly lend their aid to every nation which wished to get rid of its oppressors. The military preparations, therefore, were pushed on with infinite zeal; bureaus were opened in

every street and square, where the volunteers entered their names;[1] and by command of the Municipality all the iron railings were removed from the houses to make pikes, and all the bells from the Churches to make balls. This sometimes caused a tumult among the friends of the Church, and the National guard had to enforce obedience by arms. At the same time the formation of a camp under the walls of the capital was commenced, and the work of throwing up intrenchments portioned out to the several Sections. In short, business of all sorts was carried to the Hôtel de Ville. As all other authorities were overthrown, every man betook himself to the only one which still existed, and which zealously drew all affairs into the sphere of its operations. Petitions, advice, deputations, interpellations, and threats, rapidly succeeded one another. Sometimes it was volunteers who demanded arms; sometimes prisoners who wanted to be set at liberty; sometimes *Sansculottes* who desired to take vengeance on the tyrant's myrmidons of the 10th of August; and sometimes *Fédérés* who in the name of the People demanded the means of subsistence. The Municipality heard them all, and decided on every case. Its sittings were held uninterruptedly, day and night; the members ate in the hall at the expense of the city, and slept by turns in the Committee rooms. They had their bureau and their rostra, as in the National Assembly, and a tumultous crowd of auditors, who often took part in the proceedings, applauding or raising a disturbance according to circumstances. Every body was armed; before the door of the Hôtel stood shotted

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[1] It is characteristic of this party, that in spite of all the exhortations of the National Assembly they never allowed the battalion of Marseillois to go to the army. They wanted these men for the service of the Jacobin Club at home. Two months elapsed before they left Paris. But they did not go to the Eastern frontier, which was threatened. On the issue of a decree that they should defend the Sea-coast, they went home. After this no mention occurs of the Marseillois. Ternaux, *Terreur*, III. 126.

canon; and the whole appearance of the place was that of the head-quarters of a revolutionary army of the People.

The chief attention of the Jacobins was directed to the prosecution of opponents. On the 11th the National Assembly had appointed a Court Martial to try the defenders of the Tuileries; but the Commune declared that the real offenders would not be got at in this way, and demanded, on the 13th, that an extraordinary tribunal should be appointed for all traitors. Every Section of Paris was to name a member, and no appeal was to be allowed. Instead of this, the Assembly ordered that the *barrières*, which had been closed on the 10th, should now be re-opened, and egress from the city granted on showing a passport. Robespierre and Marat vied with one another in opposing this expedient. Robespierre declared in the Hôtel de Ville that the opening of the *barrières* would lend security to every traitor; that the abyss was yawning on all sides; that murderous plots surrounded the holy cause; that the conspiracy was nurtured in the very Assembly, and that the People must once more save itself. The People in the galleries expressed their assent with loud cries of triumph, and spread their excitement and anger through the Sectional Assemblies. On the following day deputations thronged to the bar of the National Assembly. The first extorted the withdrawal of the decree respecting the *barrières;* a second demanded the trial of the murderers of the People; and a third declared that they would not leave the spot till the decree was passed. This called forth a cry of indignation from the Assembly, and this deputation received no answer; but they heard a decree which placed the families of the *Emigrés* as hostages under the surveillance of the police, and ordered their horses to be seized for the army.

If, however, they hoped to appease the Municipality by this trifling booty, they were greatly mistaken. Reports were brought to the Hôtel de Ville that the People in their righteous impatience were about to storm the prisons. The

Hôtel de Ville applauded, exhorted the people, however, to keep the peace, and distributed money among them. On the 15th, Robespierre, referring to the temper manifested by the People, repeated his demand, and succeeded so far, that a popular tribunal was empowered to try the guilty without appeal. The influence of the Gironde, however, once more introduced a few mitigating clauses into the decree. Upon this the Democrats lost all patience; they warned their followers, indeed, against a partial, and therefore unwise, insurrection, but the Faubourg St. Antoine sent word to the Hôtel de Ville that they would sound the tocsin, unless the decree were immediately passed. Accordingly Robespierre's adherents gave the Assembly grace till midnight, till which time they would defer the firing of the alarm guns and the general call to arms. The decree was then passed without further resistance, on the ground of necessity. On the following day, the Sections brought the elections to an end, and the first Revolutionary Tribunal commenced its operations. The Commune added the resolution that only good patriots should be admitted as counsel for the defendants, and that even these might only confer with their clients in public.

Armed with such a weapon, the victorious party had in their hands the life of every man who appeared dangerous to the fulfilment of their wishes. Every member of the faction could procure the arrest of any one to whom he owed a grudge, by bringing forward his name in his Section; and when once arrested, the accused had no other guarantee for his life than the good pleasure of the Hôtel de Ville. After thus making themselves masters of the lives of individuals, the next care of the Jacobins was to render an outbreak of universal despair impossible, and for this purpose to create a sufficient armed force. The old propositions for the reformation of the Parisian National Guard afforded the means of doing this; and they were carried into effect on the 19th of August. The existing 60 battalions were dissolved,

and organized in Companies, one for each of the 48 Sections. The Artillery, which had hitherto been distributed among the battalions, was now formed in separate companies, to each of which was added a workmen's company formed of pikemen. And lastly, after the 10th August, it was a matter of course that not only the possessors of property, but all the citizens, were allowed and commanded to enrol themselves. By these means the nominal strength of the Parisian army was raised from 30,000 to 100,000 men; but in reality the richer class,—which had always contained many lukewarm elements, and was now tormented and intimidated in every possible way,—avoided military service as much as they did the Sectional assemblies. And thus the previous traditions and ties of the corps were lost and broken; the democratic influences were completely predominant, and for extreme cases, the radical elements—the artillery and the workmen—were united in bodies distinct from the rest of the forces.

The importance of this innovation to the Burgher class must have been revealed to the blindest by a supplementary proviso of the Commune. The signers of the two petitions of the 8,000 and the 20,000 were declared incapable of holding any civil office, or of bearing arms;—nay, they were even to be imprisoned until their weapons had been delivered up. It was an easy thing by this expedient to disarm and imprison all those who had hitherto composed the National Guard.

In the midst of this enthusiastic zeal for persecution, the long-vexed question, concerning the fate of the non-juring Priests, was quickly decided. On the 23d Cambon[1] disgraced himself by the cruel motion, that they should be transported to Cayenne. The degree of fanaticism by which the National Assembly was possessed was indicated by the proposition of

[1] Buchez joins the name of Vergniaud to his, but the Moniteur only mentions Cambon.

Brissot, who defended the Priests against Cambon's motion by saying, that they ought not thus to ruin the colonies, since a priest was more incorrigible than a vagabond. The decree at last assumed the following form; that all non-juring Priests should leave France within fourteen days, with a small *viaticum*. In most of the Departments, every thing was prepared for its immediate execution; the Priests were dragged into the towns, and the mob were impatient to get rid of them.

And thus even the persons of the defeated party fell under the democratic power of the Hotel de Ville. The Democrats were not quite so expert in the management of Terrorism as they became a year afterwards. The component parts of *the great engine of destruction* were subsequently rendered *still more perfect, but all the essential factors* had already been discovered. The Police in the hands of democratic clubs (the Sectional Assemblies were nothing else) the administration of justice in the hands of a democratic Committee bound by no law—the military power in the hands of the emancipated Proletaries;—these were the germs of the whole system of government carried out by the National Convention, in which all other Authorities were empty forms, and the Revolutionary committees, the Revolutionary tribunal, and the Revolutionary army, the only effective elements. At both periods every mitigating regulation, every protecting form, every obstructing law was removed; and every path opened to the arbitrary despotism of the victorious party. If this faction—which had no other title to power than material force—had been the most numerous in the country, the unbridled license of its principles would have made itself felt in its own internal organization. But the more decidedly it was in the minority, and knew itself to be so, the more deeply did it feel the necessity of keeping up a strict discipline among its members, of bringing the reins of power into fewer and fewer hands, and giving its organs a more and more sharply defined character. For of

all its leaders Robespierre and Billaud-Varennes had indisputably the greatest ability for this task; and this their formal and tactical capacity gives the key to the extraordinary career of these two men, who possessed neither eloquence nor courage, neither political nor diplomatic knowledge—and, therefore, none of those qualities which would seem to be the most indispensable, in the condition of France at that period. At the time of which we are speaking, in August 1792, everything was rudely sketched; the military preparations were of a provisional and makeshift character, such as would naturally be adopted immediately after a bold *coup de main;* but the most appropriate means were taken of placing France in a state of siege, in which the Proletaries were to act the part of the standing army.

The rule of the poorest class was the first and last object of the whole system. "The poor man alone," said Robespierre, "is virtuous, wise, and fitted to govern." "The rich," said Marat, "have so long sucked out the marrow of the People, that they are now visited with a crushing retribution." "We made the Revolution," cried Danton, "and we intend to be paid for it." They therefore attacked with equal zeal the property as well as the persons of the conquered party, to which last, as was emphatically declared, all possessors of property belonged.[1]

The Commune brought forward a most comprehensive proposal of this nature on the 11th of August;—that the National Assembly should forbid all trade in specie, *i. e.* give forced currency to the *assignats.* At this time silver was to paper as 100 to 160; and the poor, who for a long time had had nothing but paper money, thought that they should now reach firm ground; and even the Government, they imagined, must approve of a measure which gave them the power of continually making new issues of paper money. The National Assembly referred the motion for the present

[1] Prudhomme, Sep. 1.

to a Committee, but hastened all the more eagerly to still the hunger of the patriotic democrats from other sources. In the first rank of the contributors, in this case also, was the King, and in the first rank of the receivers the Parisian Commune. The Palace of the Tuileries was stripped of all its valuables on the 11th, and the gold and silver plate was taken to the Hôtel de Ville. When, on the 16th, reference was made in the Assembly to the moveable property contained in the other royal residences, it was discovered that the greater part had been likewise removed by the Commissioners of the Hôtel de Ville;[1] upon which a decree was made that the residue should be sold and the proceeds paid into the treasury. The Commune, however, seized on the treasures of the Churches, appropriated the plate, and coined money from it for their own coffers. Pending this operation, they drew upon the State according to their old custom, by carrying a decree through the National Assembly, which granted 850,000 francs a month to the City police, the payment of which was to date from the 1st of January—in all nearly seven millions. But these sums appear quite insignificant when compared with the enormous confiscations decreed by the Assembly towards the end of the month. The first of these was directed against the Emigrés. Their property had been under sequestration since April; it was now ordered to be sold, and for the sake of enabling the *sans-culottes* to become purchasers, it was offered for sale in lots of two or three acres, for which payment was to be made in the shape of an annual rent. The creditors of the Emigrés were to be satisfied to the extent of the proceeds of the sale, and the purchaser was empowered to eject the tenants, even if their contract had been made with the former owner; in short nothing was wanting to characterize the transaction as a barefaced robbery.[2] The same spirit animated two other decrees of the 25th and 28th, according to which all

[1] *Moniteur.* Roland, II. 339. — [2] Definitive decree of Sept. 2.

ground rents were to be treated as feudal rights—*i. e.* abolished without compensation, unless they could be proved, by the production of original documents, to be the interest of a loan. It is impossible to give even an approximate estimate of the pecuniary amount of these violations of the law; but we shall certainly not exaggerate in valuing the landed property disposed of by the three decrees above-mentioned at 6,000 million francs. We see that the National Assembly were no niggards in dealing with other people's property; but the democrats were not a little incensed that their motion against trading in money was not immediately adopted. The men of the 14th of July and the 10th of August, therefore, indulged, on the 16th of August, in language which breathed throughout the spirit of Robespierre. "Do the rich then not see," said their spokesman, "that they can only secure their own treasures by clothing the poor? But they are more obtuse than the greatest criminals—they hope for protection from the Austrians. Your men of genius seek the balance of political forces in hair-splitting speculations; but we have found it in our hearts. To what purpose is the controversy about republic or monarchy? Create a government which will raise the poor man above his petty wants, and deprive the rich man of his superfluity, and you will thereby restore a perfect equilibrium." The programme of the contest which was henceforth to rage through the whole nation was thus proclaimed at the bar of the National Assembly.

The population of Paris was already greatly intimidated; yet such threats at these could not fail to arouse a certain degree of resistance. On the 25th, one of the Sections, secretly instigated by the suggestions of Roland and other Girondists, passed a resolution to withdraw their Commissioners from the Hôtel de Ville, and to denounce the further action of the Municipality as an usurpation. In a few days other Sections followed this example; yet the influence of the Hôtel de Ville continued to increase. Robespierre loudly

demanded the heads of these traitors; the Commune arrested a great number of persons, and the patriots remained undisturbed in the Sectional assemblies. Yet this first impulse was sensibly felt, and the more so when the nomination of electors for the Convention began in Paris on the 26th. The fate of mob rule was called in question, in the event of the great mass of the population taking part in the elections. The present effete Assembly could be easily managed, but how would it be with the National Convention, which the democratic revolutionists had themselves demanded, and prospectively invested with unlimited powers? Should the Conventional elections return a majority hostile to the Hôtel de Ville, the latter was resolved on a contest of life and death, the issue of which, however, it was impossible to foresee. The revolutionary faction therefore prepared to control the elections by every means in their power, and at any sacrifice. Their policy was comprehended in the single word—terrorism, which was to be exercised on an increased scale in Paris, and extended forthwith into all the Departments of France. And thus from out the everlasting cry of treachery, the scheme was gradually evolved of arresting as large a number of political opponents as possible throughout the whole of France, and of destroying them in prison by a general massacre. By this means the revolutionists hoped to secure a majority in the elections, and the predominance of their party for the future; and no longer to have to complain that the new tribunal only furnished the spectacle of one execution in two days, or that the property of the condemned fell to the Treasury instead of the patriots.

The exact point of time at which the chiefs of the Hôtel de Ville came to this resolution is determined by the following dates. On the 19th of August, Marat, in his journal "La Republique," exhorted the people to massacre the traitors who were incarcerated in the Abbey; it was a folly, he said, to go through the previous formality of a trial. On the 23d, the Municipality called on the National Assembly

to remove the persons accused before the State tribunal at Orleans to Paris. As the Assembly did not agree to this, but only sent orders on the 25th to curtail their trial, 1,200 or 1,500 men—ostensibly of the National guard, but made up in part of ruffians from Marseilles, Bordeaux and Brest—set out under Fournier and Lazouski for Orleans, to make short work with the prisoners. The National Assembly, indeed, issued a decree, on the 26th, that the Ministers should send a sufficient force to protect the prisons; but the Ministers gave this commission to Fournier himself, and sent two Commissioners, Bourdon and Dubail,[1] with him. On the same day Danton caused a list of all the prisoners in Paris to be laid before himself as Minister of Justice, in order, as he afterwards said, to distinguish and rescue the innocent. The list of the "guilty," therefore, was even at that time settled. On the 28th, Laussel, the above-mentioned leader of the Lyons Jacobins, who was then in Paris, wrote to his friends, at home: "Our volunteers have already been two or three days on the road to Orleans, to despatch the prisoners in that city; tell me how many heads have fallen in Lyons; it would be an infamous thing if any of our enemies escaped; take the proper measures, therefore, for everything is favourable to a general masacre of the disaffected."[2]

By the 26th of August, therefore, at latest, the resolution was taken to direct a murderous blow against the opponents of Democracy through the whole of France. It cannot admit of a doubt that the main object was to control the elections for the Convention,[3] though the instigators of the plot

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[1] *Vid.* the official documents in Lottin, Orleans, II. 1. p. 354. They are not in the *Moniteur*. — [2] Extract from the letter in Guillon, "Lyon," I. 123. — [3] This needs no proof. Who can persuade us that the calculating Robespierre postponed the commencement of the massacre to the 2rd of Sept.—the first day of the elections—by mere accident. We shall soon see that the statement that he had no share in the matter is false. Morris, who was invariably well-instructed, writes, on the 23rd of Oct.: "The sanguinary events which have a ken place, and which were partial

naturally avoided all mention of their real purpose. As was usual in all the crimes of the Revolution, they brought forward, as a pretext, the dangers of foreign war—well knowing that they struck a chord which would vibrate in every Frenchman's heart. We shall soon see how greatly this device contributed to make the execution of the bloody scheme possible; that it was only a pretext on the part of the conspirators is incontestably proved by a comparison of dates. It was not until the 26th of August, when Danton took the first step towards the execution of the scheme, that the news of the fall of the little border fortress of Longwy arrived in Paris.[1] This was the first disastrous intelligence which had been received in the capital, and of any other dangers which may have threatened on the frontiers, during the same period, the instigators of the September murders knew nothing. The fall of Longwy was of no great importance, as long as the French armies had suffered no losses; and in this respect nothing but what was favourable had been reported in Paris. It was known that Lafayette had fled, and that his army was animated by the best possible spirit; but nothing had as yet transpired respecting the evils which had resulted to the camp from his desertion. The Commissioners apprehended an attack upon Sedan, and recommended the formation of a camp of reserve; but they spoke in high terms of the courage and patriotism of the army. Dumouriez, who had been appointed in Lafayette's

executions of great plans," &c. Cambon exclaimed in the Nat. Assembly on Sept. 4th: "*Les agitateurs dont le but secret est de se faire nommer à la Convention Nationale.*" — [1] The Commandant, Lavergne, was compelled to capitulate by the terrified citizens. After he had demanded a court-martial for more than a year, he was at last brought before the Revolutionary Tribunal and summarily sentenced to death. On the announcement of the sentence, his wife, who was among the audience, cried out in despair, *Vive le Roi!* She was immediately seized, and declared that she knew no other means of dying with her husband. *The tribunal fulfilled her desire.* Ternaux, III. 130.

stead, showed not the slightest uneasiness in regard to the Prussians, but only spoke of the certainty with which Belgium might be conquered. It is true that the position of affairs soon became more alarming, but we may confidently repeat that the danger of the country from foreign war had nothing at all to do with the project of the September massacres.

No sooner, however, had the murderous resolution been taken, than one cause of alarm after another arose on the frontiers. In the first place, the army of Lafayette, most of whose officers followed the example of their chief, fell more and more into confusion and disorder. Nothing was heard from the new Commander, and no intelligence was received from Luckner. The Meuse, which in that country has many fords, was a weak bulwark against an enemy supposed to be in five-fold superior numbers; and under these circumstances even the capture of Longwy occasioned great alarm, both in the army, and in the minds of the Commissioners of the National Assembly. They were informed by the Commandant of Stenai, situated on the nearest passage of the Meuse, that he could not hold the place against an attack; and they resolved to return with all speed to Paris, and there to push forward the necessary measures in person. Kersaint represented to the Minister that his first care must be to collect a considerable force before Paris; "We do not wish to alarm you," he said, "but to save you from a false security; the danger is imminent; above all things send hither a Commander in Lafayette's place."

Servan saw plainly that matters were becoming serious, and he had on the 26th, immediately after the fall of Longwy, sent precise orders to Dumouriez to lead all the forces he could spare to Sedan. But even he was very far removed from any feeling of hopelessness or despair. "If," he wrote to the General, "you are not able to prevent the enemy from marching on Paris, throw yourself on his rear; Luckner will attack him in the flank." These words contain the essence

of the plan of the impending campaign; they express the instinct of a soldier, who derives consolation and calmness from his own courage. But there were persons who drew different conclusions from the fall of Longwy.

From a military point of view it must have appeared above all things necessary to send forward the whole of the armed forces at that time in Paris, to the seat of war. But the Demagogues rejoiced at the taking of Longwy, which gave employment to their armed followers in Paris, and enabled them, by raising anew the cry of treachery, to extinguish in the minds of the citizens the last spark of compassion for the Aristocrats. Both these tendencies displayed themselves, side by side, and in opposition to one another, in the most glaring colours. Cambon proclaimed, in the National Assembly, that the *Fédérés* would now hasten to protect the frontiers, and that Paris alone would furnish 30,000; and the raising of this latter force was actually decreed on the 27th. The *Fédérés*, however, appeared at the bar of the Assembly, violently protesting against this reference to themselves; their proper destination, they said, was Paris, where they had to guard the captive King, and protect the National Assembly against the conspirators. Marat posted great placards at every corner of the streets, denouncing the decree concerning the 30,000 men as a piece of treachery; "Not a man," he said, "must leave Paris, for it was there that the real and most dangerous enemy was to be found." The chiefs of the Hôtel de Ville were heard coolly to remark that France was far too thickly peopled for a republican form of Government, and that about a third of its inhabitants must be got rid of before bread, peace, and liberty could be procured for the remainder.

On the 28th August Kersaint brought up his report, in which he lauded the excellence of the army, dwelt strongly on the dangers of the war, and once more urged the immediate formation of a camp of reserve at Soissons. Danton then rose. He spoke, he said, as a revolutionary Minis-

ter; the danger had been exaggerated, but a new convulsion was necessary to their salvation; the closing of the *barrières* could not be continued on account of the now commencing movement of troops, and, consequently, during that very night, all suspected persons, should their number even amount to 30,000, must be put under arrest. The Government therefore, he concluded, demanded powers to institute a search for arms, even in the night-time. After the National Assembly had granted the necessary permission, without any opposition, Danton took measures at the Hôtel de Ville for the execution of the plan. First of all, he caused a list to be drawn up of all the needy men in Paris, for the alleged purpose of equipping them for the service of their country—but in fact to augment the force of the Marseillois and their October hero, Maillard, for the projected butchery. Then followed an ordonnance which, according to its introductory words, was intended to regulate the banishment of the non-juring priests, as had been decreed by the Assembly; but in reality ordered their arrest, for which the decree gave not the slightest authority. These measures were then immediately put into execution. All the communications throughout the vast city were barred at the same moment, and armed bodies of from 40 to 60 men marched from the meeting place of every Section into every street, occupied the outlets, and searched every house, first for arms, and then for suspected persons. About 60,000 men, almost exclusively composed of pikemen and workmen, were set in motion during this night. The result of their operations was 3,000 new arrests, and the deepest consternation among all those who did not belong to the now ruling class. A number of householders fled from the city, to the joy of the Municipality, who immediately confiscated their houses with all that they contained. A part of the arrested were released on the 30th August, but the gaolers were ordered to allow the others free choice of food and drink—as was the custom in the case of all persons con-

demned to death. Yet before the final catastrophe, one more effort at resistance was made—it was the last!

Roland and the Gironde felt their position becoming more and more intolerable. The reins of government had escaped from their hands; they exercised no influence on the real business of the State, or any of the measures by which the future of the country was to be determined. They looked on at the machinations of the Commune, and the restless activity of Danton; but though they might have some suspicion of what was in preparation, the solution of the enigma was entirely hidden from them. They had the consciousness of being tried patriots—they were quite willing that the Aristocrats should receive a severe lesson, if their own safety could have been guaranteed to them under the absolute rule of the Municipality. Instead of this, their friend Péthion was entirely excluded from the business of the mayoralty, and Marat, moreover, daily loaded him with the bitterest reproaches for his criminal indolence in such dangerous times. Roland was attacked with ever-increasing fury, and at last the Municipality ordered Brissot's *collaborateur* in the "French Patriot" to be brought before them to answer for a calumnious article. Their patience was then exhausted, and on the 30th August the storm broke loose in the National Assembly. Roland brought a complaint against the Municipality on the ground of the defective provisioning of Paris; Cambon charged them with unauthorised interference with the administration of the public purse; Larivière reported that a town-councillor, and member of the extraordinary tribunal, had been arrested for theft; and Roland again mentioned the attempt of another Communal officer to steal valuables from the crown treasury, the Intendant and the General Inspector of which had, in a very suspicious manner, been arrested by order of the Hôtel de Ville. And when, in the last place, Servan announced that all the officials of the War Ministry had been kept in arrest during the whole morning by order of the Commune, and the du-

ties of the War Office thereby completely interrupted, a motion of Guadet was carried, amidst violent excitement, dissolving the Municipality of the 10th of August and summoning the Sections to a new election.[1]

Danton's friend, Thuriot, warned them, that a decree of this kind might lead to disastrous consequences, but they were not to be deterred; and they further proceeded to cancel the prosecution of Brissot's journal, and censured the imprisonment of the priests. In this case, however, where the Assembly had nothing but speeches to oppose to pikes, the *dénouement* was not far off.

In the evening the Ministers, and the chiefs of parties in the Assembly, had a meeting to consult on the war. Servan had little comfort to give, and no further reinforcements in readiness. Guadet and Vergniaud wished to send all the men in Paris into the camp before the city for a final struggle of life and death; but there was no difficulty in demonstrating the futility, from a military point of view, of such a proceeding. Roland and others then proposed a retreat to the South; but it was evident that in deserting the customary seat of government, they would be resigning all its powers. Whereupon Danton rose, censured such pernicious pusillanimity, declared that all retreat would be destruction, that the real peril lay in the cooperation of internal and external enemies, and concluded with these words; "The Royalists are many, the Republicans are few; there is but one expedient, the Royalists must be terrorised!" A significant gesture accompanied these words. The Assembly was silent; who would be counted as a Royalist?

The terror was already awakened. When, on the following morning, a deputation from the Hôtel de Ville appeared at the bar of the Assembly to protest against the decree of

[1] These dates completely refute what Louis Blanc says about the unreasonable and arbitrary caprice with which the Nat. Assembly proceeded against the Commune. Blanc, on his side, only mentions the robbery of plate, and passes over all the rest in silence.

the previous day, in the name of the sovereign people, which had invested the Municipality with unlimited powers and sanctioned all its acts; when Tallien read an address drawn up by Robespierre, which openly declared, that within three days the soil of liberty would be freed from the presence of the detested priests; when a noisy mob surrounded the Hall of Assembly, prepared, as they said, to die, if necessary, with the Town-councillors;—no one ventured to utter a word of censure or protest. The Committee of Twelve were instructed to report once more on the Municipality. The Girondists saw themselves deserted by the cowardly crowd of their adherents; the Hôtel de Ville remained masters of the field, and hurried onward, unopposed, to the execution of their schemes.

CHAPTER III.

ELECTION OF THE NATIONAL CONVENTION.

The metropolitan police committee.—Marat, massacres of the 2nd and 7th september.—Threats against the girondists.—Booty of the municipality.—Communistic decrees.—Elections to the convention in paris.—Failure of the democrats in the provinces.—Reaction among the burghers of paris.—Proclamation of the republic.

For the execution of their grand plot, the Revolutionists needed, in the first place, a visible presiding central authority. Neither Robespierre nor Danton were willing publicly to lend their names, or to allow the Municipality, or the Ministry of Justice, as such, to direct the general massacre. The first body which presented itself as adapted for their purpose was the Communal *Comité de Surveillance,* the proper organ of the higher revolutionary police. This body, it is true, existed at the time only in name, for the proceedings of Sergent and Panis were too bad for the majority even of this Committee, which had refused to take charge of any more money or valuables without formal registration. Whereupon Panis promptly procured a résolution from the Municipality which removed the conscientious members, as not being *au niveau de la Revolution,* and empowered the others to fill up their number by a free election. The chiefs of the party thus created a convenient organ of action, which willingly lent its name to the execution of any commands whatever. Round this centre were assembled Danton, Robespierre, Marat, Billaud, Manuel and Tallien, who deliberated on all the particulars of the impending butchery, and decided on the ways and means. Robespierre, impelled

by suspicion and party hatred, but not by lust of plunder, was for exterminating only the Noblesse and the Priests; but the others would have been ill satisfied by such half measures, and they therefore adhered to the more comprehensive plan. Danton, on the other hand, opposed Robespierre and Marat, when on the 30th they called on the *Comité de Surveillance* to arrest Brissot and Roland. Robespierre denounced them as mischievous enemies of the Revolution; but confessed that such a measure might bring danger to its originators. Marat would listen to no considerations, so that Danton cried out that he (Marat) would ruin them all. "If you were all fellows like me," answered Marat "ten thousand traitors would be cut to pieces." For the present, however, the order of arrest was torn up, but the idea was by no means abandoned by its two authors. There was no little strife with regard to the ways and means of effecting the massacre. Marat wished simply to set fire to the prisons; another proposed to drown the prisoners; but Billaud engaged to collect a sufficient number of assassins, and succeeded in negativing the other propositions.[1]

The execution of the plot was fixed for the 2nd of September, as being a Sunday, on which day it was easier to

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[1] Prudhomme, *Crimes*, &c. There are neither external nor internal grounds for doubting these statements. If any body was likely to be well-informed it was Prudhomme. Louis Blanc, indeed, ignores these facts, although he adopts other parts of the report into his narrative as perfectly trustworthy, in order to prove his proposition that Robespierre no doubt, acted very wrongly, but only in having listlessly allowed a butchery which he deplored. According to his view the September massacres were not the result of any prepared plan, but of an universal outbreak of despair caused by the dangers of war. He abandons, on this occasion, his usual position, that in the Revolution the People always aimed at and accomplished what was great and noble, while only individual intriguers were guilty of crimes. He also forgets a whole series of well-authenticated facts, which he himself subsequently brings forward, and which Ternaux (Terreur, III. 515) completes, and establishes their correctness beyond all dispute.

assemble a restless crowd. From the large number of accomplices the secret was ill kept, and the dull pressure of anxious foreboding weighed upon the whole of Paris. All those who did not belong to the class of Jacobin Proletaries, remained in the silent concealment of their houses. The Section had been occupied since the 27th in the nomination of electors; the electoral meetings had never been so thinly attended,[1] and it was certain that only Jacobins would be returned as Electors. The prisoners had expected an attack for many weeks past. The chiefs made use of the last day in liberating a few favoured individuals, partly rich men, like the Prince of Poix and Beaumarchais who bought their liberty, the former from Panis, and the latter from Manuel; and partly old acquaintances, who, like Daubigny, or Danton's cousin, Godot, had been arrested for embezzlement and theft. The Commune, in order to cloak the systematic preparations of their nefarious plot, caused the *barrières* to be reopened; and Robespierre even brought forward a motion that the Municipality, in consideration of the prevailing distrust expressed against them, should abdicate, and appeal to the people. The proposal was, of course, negatived without a discussion. The National Assembly received the first intelligence that the Prussians were before Verdun, and occupied the sitting with insignificant military arrangements. The Gironde, it would seem, still hoped to come to a tolerable understanding with the Democrats, since they had again, on the previous day, given up their attack upon the Hôtel de Ville;—or did they make advances from fear? At all events they once more showed their anti-royal side. Roland published a circular, in which he made known to all the Communes of France, the alleged treasonable correspondence of Louis XVI., complained of the constitutional inviolability of the King, and recommended to the whole nation the formation of clubs and popular unions —a step which only excited the laughter of the Democrats.

Their time was now fully come. The danger which threat-

ened Verdun was an effectual means of heightening the anxious fears of the citizens, and their anger against the traitors to their country—and of deadening their feelings of compassion towards the victims. On Sunday morning, Manuel, from the Hôtel de Ville, summoned the People to arms. Verdun he said, was attacked, and could not be held; the whole of Paris must march out for its protection. It was resolved to call out all the citizens for the struggle, and to encamp them, in the interim, on the Champ de Mars. All suspected persons, and cowards were to be disarmed, and all the *barrières* closed; twenty-four Commissioners were to proceed to the armies and into the Departments, to extend the impulse given in the capital; the other members were to close their sitting in order to describe the dangers of the country in their respective Sections. Robespierre had already proposed this step on the 1st of Sept., which was now adopted; and these were the men who gave the signal in the Sections for the attack on the prisons, while the tocsin was clanging and the alarm guns booming through the streets. The citizens either remained timidly at home, or proceeded slowly to the *rendez-vous* of their battalions. In the meeting-places of the Sections, no one was found but the well-prepared and willing mass of proletaries, who in several quarters passed a resolution not to quit Paris until all traitors had been exterminated. Meanwhile Panis, Sergent and their associates, constituted themselves, at the Hôtel de Ville, as the new *Comité de Surveillance;* and, in accordance with the decree issued by the Municipality two days before, associated Marat and five others with themselves as colleagues. From this quarter the bands of murderers received their special instructions, together with money and provisions; and the Committee further gave orders for the liberation of all those arrested for debt, that the blow might fall with greater certainty on the political prisoners. The National Assembly at first only heard of the decree of the municipality summoning all Paris to arms, and rewarded it, after a pa-

thetic address of Vergniaud, with loud applause. The decree of the 30th of August, by which the Assembly had dissolved the Municipality, had just been recalled at the instance of the Dantonists, and only augmentation of the Municipal council by new elections was ordered. The Ministers, with the exception of Roland, now made their appearance for the purpose—to use the expression of Danton—of electrifying the Assembly; *i. e.* of asking it to entrust them with an unlimited dictatorship. Lebrun began with the fabricated intelligence that Russia was preparing to make war on France, and sending out an army and a fleet. Servan followed with a demand of four million francs for extraordinary war expenses. The minds of the Assembly were prepared for what was coming. Danton rose and said; "The country is about to save itself; the Commune has given a grand example, it is for you to support the sublime movement of the People. We demand sentence of death against every one who refuses to march. We demand sentence of death against every one who directly or indirectly throws obstacles in the way of the Government. Boldness! boldness! and again I say boldness!—and the country is saved." All demands were granted, and the required orders given, and with such unheard-of powers the Ministers left the Assembly. Meanwhile some of the Sections (Poissonière, Luxembourg), at the instigation of the Hôtel de Ville, passed a resolution that, in consideration of the danger of the country, the prisons should be purged, and the arrested Priests and other suspected persons put to death in the dungeons of Paris, Orleans, and other places; and that, with a view to uniformity of proceeding, the necessary regulations should be procured from the Municipal Council.[1] While blood was flowing in streams in every prison, Danton, with his associates, Desmoulins, Robert, Favre d'Eglantine, and their wives, sat down to a splendid banquet.[2]

[1] Ternaux, III. 218. — [2] Prudhomme, *Crimes*, &c.

The massacre began about 3 o'clock with the murder of twenty priests, who were being transported from the Hôtel de Ville to the Abbey, and were cut down by the mob, incited by the *Fédérés*, who served as their escort. After this, one band of about sixty men occupied the Abbey, another the gaol of the Carmelites, a third the Conciergerie, a fourth the prison of the Chatelet, and a fifth that of La Force. These men demanded a register of the prisoners, took them for the most part singly from their cells, brought them before a popular tribunal, which the leaders of the bands had formed by order of the *Comité de Surveillance*,[1] and pronounced judgment on them after a short examination. All the accused were compelled first of all to empty their pockets; those who were condemned were thrust out into the court of the house, and immediately slaughtered. Horrible shouts of joy accompanied every stroke; the murderers sometimes agreed not to strike with the edge of the sword, that they might prolong the pleasure of their bloody work. The Commune provided wine, the women mutilated the corpses, and children were made to drink the blood of the Aristocrats. Manuel, Billaud, and the members of the *Comité de Surveillance* went about praising and encouraging the assassins;[2] the different gangs mutually sent from the prisons to enquire whether all was going on well, and received the desired answer amidst thundering shouts of "Vive le Peuple!" Thus matters went on during the afternoon and the whole of the night.

The feeling which prevailed in the city is difficult to describe. Even in the democratic quarters men shuddered at the horrible details which reached their ears; "But after all," they said, "it is necessary; the Aristocrats would have butchered our wives and children, if we had not got the

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[1] Copied in Granier de Cassagnac, *Les Girondins*, &c., II. 156. — [2] Granier de Cassagnac, II, 35 has collected these details of their proceedings from the minutes of the Municipality.

start of them." In the wealthier Sections, consternation, abhorrence and grief agitated the mind in turn; many thousand families were in a state of deadly anxiety about their kindred, and awaited with eagerness the requisition of the armed force, which, as they imagined, could not possibly be long deferred. They were not yet aware that all the Authorities were at the head of the bloody enterprise; that the Mayor Péthion, with prudent selfishness, took the greatest care not to draw the fury of the murderers on himself; and that Santerre, the Commander of the National Guard, was entirely at the beck of his brother-in-law Panis, and Robespierre. And for advancing by themselves, and trying their fortune against the murderous gangs, the National guard had been too thoroughly cowed and subdued, ever since the 10th of August. When a courageous advocate, named Lavaux, undertook to rouse the men of his Section, he could only collect a strong patrol; when they arrived at the nearest prison they had dwindled down to nine!

In spite of the tidings which reached them in quick succession, the National Assembly obstinately proceeded with the order of the day. Late in the evening they did indeed send a deputation to the Abbey, who returned with the report that they had not been able to make their way through the crowd, and owing to the darkness had not been able to see what was going on. With many of the members it was fear that kept them silent; but there was also, among the Left, a large number of participators in the plot, and a crowd of servile zealous spirits, who, after the speeches of the three Ministers, feared by censuring the massacres to injure the welfare of their country; and lastly, the Girondists had, up to this time, no objection to make to the massacre. For the present they heard only of murdered Priests, Swiss-guards, and the noble young *Sicarii;* and these were as much the opponents of the Gironde as of the Sansculottes. To inspire the incorrigible royalist with profound terror seemed to them conducive to the public weal. The journalists of

the party, therefore, Louvet, Brissot and Gorsas, prepared to speak on the following day of "the sad, but wholesome and necessary jurisdiction of the people." The National Assembly preserved an utter silence with singular unanimity.

At the Hôtel de Ville, on the contrary, the storm raged fiercely. The Municipality reassembled at 4 o'clock, and news was brought that the People were storming the prisons. The excitement was tremendous; for even in this assembly there was a number of uninitiated, who indignantly raised their voices against bloodshed. In deference to these, it was resolved to send Commissioners to the prison, in the first place to liberate the prisoners for debt, but also to recall the People to a sense of law and duty. But here again the democratic leaders were careful to name the proper persons; the very men who were sent to arrest the massacre were seated at midnight in La Force as chief judges of the People, and leaders in the bloody work. Robespierre at the same time recurred to his hatred of the Girondists. Billaud-Varennes depicted in a circumstantial oration the position of the Kingdom, which was threatened by foreign enemies, and torn by domestic traitors. Whereupon Robespierre declared that as no one dared to name the leaders of the conspiracy, he came forward to impeach the majority of the Ministers, Roland, Brissot, and the whole Girondist faction, and the wicked Committee of Twenty-one; and said that he would bring forward proofs on the following day, that they had all of them sold themselves to the Duke of Brunswick. The Municipality without hesitation decreed that the Ministers had forfeited the confidence of the People.[1] The object was, no doubt, to unite the whole power of the Government in the hands of Danton and the leaders of the Communal Council. This decree was also adopted in some

[1] This does not appear in the protocol of the Commune, but is mentioned on the 3rd in the sitting of the Nat. Assembly. Ternaux (III. 205) refers Robespierre's speech to the 1st of Sept.

of the Sections;[1] some hundred armed men endeavoured to force their way into Roland's house, and the *Comité de Surveillance* issued a warrant for the arrest of the Minister Brissot, and eight of the Girondists.[2] This was equivalent to a sentence of death against them all; but Danton once more interfered, because he apprehended evil consequences to his own party. It was finally agreed to rest satisfied with searching Brissot's house, and only to proceed further in case his papers should afford sufficient grounds for so doing. Nothing whatever was found; yet Robespierre continually returned to his charges against the Twenty-one and Brissot, and the secret understanding of the Gironde with the Prussians.[3] He especially depicted in the most glaring colours[4] the sinister influence of Roland on the approaching elections for the Convention.

These occurrences lit up, as by a flash of lightning, the abyss which yawned at the feet of the Girondists. Henceforward an amalgamation of their own party with the Democrats was impossible. Immediate danger to their own lives was needed to force this conviction upon them, and even now it made its way but slowly into the minds of some among them. Roland took the lead. His journalist, Louvet, was directed to publish on the 3rd of Sept. a new edition of the journal of the 2nd. of Sept., in which the warm approval of the murders was exchanged for equally emphatic censure.[5] In a letter to the National Assembly he denounced

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[1] Peltier (233), probably following Louvet, refers it to Sept. 1st. — [2] According to Louvet on Sept 1st; according to Péthion, Sept. 4th; but the 2nd is established as the right date by Roland's letter to the Nat. Assembly of the 3rd, his placard of the 13th (Buchez, 18, 29), and the *Mémoires* of his wife (II. 20). — [3] Reports on this head in the Nat. Assembly, Sept. 4, XVII. 443. — [4] Gadol to Mad. Roland, Oct. 10th. That Robespierre, in the face of all these facts, simply denies in his letters (*À mes commettans*, No. 4, p. 60) all participation in the proceedings of the Municipality during the days of Sept., only shows us how little we can trust to the truth of his assertions. — [5] Beaulieu.

the attacks made upon the Ministers, referred in covert language to the prison murders, and induced that body to issue a proclamation exhorting the People to respect the laws. No farther action however was taken, and on the 3rd, at Roland's own table, his wife discussed the events of the day with calm indifference. The feeling of anger began to spread very slowly through the National Assembly, when the execution did not end with the death of the priests and the Swiss, but the bloody work was vigorously carried on on the morning of the 3rd, and the slaughter was extended to all the other prisons of the capital,—in some cases under the express authority of the Police. "If you wish," cried the impetuous Cambon in the National Assembly, on the 4th, "that the Municipality of Paris should rule the whole Empire, as ancient Rome once did, then lay your heads on the block; if not, then fulfil your oaths; enforce the national will, and chastise the intriguers, whose secret aim is to control the Conventional elections." The indignation of the great mass of the *Bourgeoisie* was likewise hourly increasing. The Presidents of all the Sections held a meeting on the evening of the 2nd, at which Péthion attended, and military measures were discussed. On this occasion violent invectives and accusations were exchanged between the Girondists and the Democrats.[1] It became evident that no end of the outrages could be looked for unless vigorous measures were adopted to put a stop to them. A body of National guards was collected, and Péthion, in answer to repeated inquiry, declared that the Commander Santerre had given the requisite orders; but these orders were still wanting,[2] and without them every man was afraid to make use of his weapons. The Presidents then appealed to Danton, as the indubitable chief of the Ministerial council. He summoned them for the evening to

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[1] Roland's letter to the Nat. Assembly of the 3d of Sept. — [2] Evidence of the Presidents of Sections before the Committee of Twenty-one, in Louvet, 133. *Conf.* Péthion's evidence in Buchez, XXI. 104.

a discussion, in which most of the Ministers, the President and Secretaries of the National Assembly, Robespierre, Péthion and others took part. They spoke in the first place with gloomy forebodings of the war; then one of the Presidents of Sections brought up the subject of the prison murders, and demanded that all who were there assembled should forthwith go and arrest the further progress of popular outrage. All were silent, till Danton cried, "Sit down, it was necessary that it should be done." The man was not satisfied; he took Péthion and Robespierre aside, and conjured them to use their influence with the Assembly to name a Dictator for 24 hours. Robespierre flew out, saying "Beware, they would appoint Brissot." Péthion said not a word.[1]

We abstain from any further delineation of the particulars of these horrible days. Enough has been brought forward to characterize the motives, the authors, and object, of the atrocities committed, and to assign them their proper place in the developement of the Revolution. To enter more into detail than was necessary for this purpose, would be to degrade the vocation of the historian. Let us now sum up. In most of the prisons the slaughter continued without interruption until the evening of the 4th; but in some until the 6th and 7th of Sept. To the shedding of blood every imaginable atrocity was added. In La Force the murderers killed the Princess Lamballe, the most intimate friend of Marie Antoinette, insulted and mangled her corpse, and paraded her head before the windows of the Temple to compel the Royal family to gaze on the horrible spectacle.[2] This was their revenge for the firmness with which the King refused to call on the King of Prussia to retreat from France.[3] In the Salpetrière, a female prison, the workmen

[1] Evidence of Mandar, Vice-President of the Section of the Temple, in Prudhomme, *Crimes*, IV. 123. — [2] Cléry, p. 21. Menessier. — [3] Here, too, the *Biographie Universelle* has done wonders in the way of warming up old lies. According to all the rules of criticism and sound sense, the testimony of Malesherbes must be sufficient to prove that he did

of the Commune first gratified their lust on their victims, and then their thirst for blood. In Bicetre, where 5,000 criminals, lunatics and invalids were collected, they butchered among several hundred other prisoners 43 boys under the age of 16, and made use of artillery to slaughter as large a number as possible, in the shortest time.[1] It is not possible to determine with any accuracy the total number of the slain. Contemporary authorities speak of eight, ten, and even fifteen thousand; the democratic writers of our own times will hardly allow of a thousand, because the lists of the two principal prisons, which have been preserved, only contain three hundred and eleven slain. But their conclusion would be made untenable by the one fact alone, that during the tumultuous proceedings of the few last days a number of arrested persons were never registered at all. Another contemporaneous list of names gives 1414; another 1316, a third 1005, but adds that besides those in Bicetre, more than a thousand people were murdered.[2] These were not all political offenders; here and there common criminals were slain, but in other quarters these last were liberated, and even enrolled among the popular judges.[3]

While the murderers were thus carrying on their bloody

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refuse. And it is as certain that Frederick William received no such letter, as that Louis never wrote it The assertion in the pseudo-memoirs of Louis XVIII., that Orleans forged Louis' handwriting, is as unfounded as the greatest part of this book. — [1] Protocol of the Nat. Assembly, Sept. 3d. In Bicetre Henriot was at the head of the murderers. — [2] The two latest investigators of this subject, Granier de Cassagnac (*Les Girondins*) and Ternaux (*Hist. de la Terreur*), after a close examination of documents, state the number of slain, the former at 1532 and the latter at 1368. The number of murderers in all the prisons together was 187, which affords a new proof of the systematic preparation of the outrage by the city authorities, and the absence of all participation in the great mass of the population. — [3] Prudhomme, *Crimes*, confirms the considerations of Garat in Nov. (Sitting of the Convention, on the 13th) that the less guilty of the released criminals were to remain at liberty, but the robbers and murderers were to be brought back to prison.

business in the prisons, the valuable property of the arrested and persecuted was brought in large quantities to the *Comité de Surveillance* of the Hotel de Ville. The murderers seldom tried to appropriate anything to themselves;[1] and Representatives of the Commune came to them, besought them not to sully the glorious day by theft, promised them regular pay, allowed them to keep a few things, but brought the greatest part of the booty into safety. In other cases, the Sectional authorities to whose district the prison belonged had to collect the effects, and then hand them over in a mass to the *Comité de Surveillance*. No catalogues were made, no receipts were given, and all orderly arrangement was avoided. If a Section had sealed up a packet, the Committee did not scruple to open it.[2] In the large halls of the Hotel de Ville they piled up chests and boxes, bags of money and *assignats*, silver vessels and gold watches, rings and jewels, arms and furniture—the fruits of house-searching, murders and liberations—without any distinction or arrangement. It is impossible to determine, even approximately, the value of these objects, as no account of them was ever kept, and the action brought by the Gironde against the members of the Committee was suspended by the fall of that party. A guess may be made at the amount, if we consider that during the countless house-searchings subsequent to the 10th of August, the ready money was always taken away and *assignats* (which then stood at 60 per cent), substituted for it;[3] that in the single night of the 29th of August, 3,000 persons, chiefly of the wealthier classes, were arrested, that at least 2,000 were put to death and robbed in the

[1] Once in the Conciergerie (*Protocol of the Commune*). In the Abbey. (*Jourdan's Report.*). The murderers received from 6 to 24 francs pay, and plenty of wine. *Conf.* Ternaux (III. 515), whose refutation of Blanc's palliating assertion, that they were paid, not for the murder, but for removing the corpses, leaves no doubt on the subject. — [2] Sitting of the Commune, Nov. 14; and *Moniteur*, May 12, 1793. — [3] Morris to Jefferson, Aug. 8. 1793.

September massacres, and that all the valuables in the churches and the royal and princely palaces[1] were involved in this general pillage. Manuel consoled the imprisoned Clergy with the prospect of being very soon removed from France, and they therefore ordered their ready money for their journey to be sent into the prisons. Among others were three Bishops belonging to wealthy families; and we may easily imagine what enormous sums must have poured in. Septeuil was treasurer of the royal civil list; he himself escaped to England, but his wife was robbed of more than a million's worth in *assignats* and jewels.[2] It was subsequently made known in the Convention, that the Commune had property to the amount of 12 millions in their keeping. Another time complaint was made that more than a million francs in gold had been taken from the articles entrusted to the Commune; while, on the other hand, Panis boasted that he had saved nearly 2 millions for the country, of which there was no entry at all. These few notices are sufficient to prove that the amount of property stolen in these few days in Paris alone, can only be reckoned by millions.

Such things need only to be mentioned to excite abhorrence. But there is something worse than blood-smeared robbery; we mean the robbery which is committed with the weapons of legislation. The latter was far more deadly in its ravages, and ventured, moreover, to assume the airs of a masterpiece of modern social policy. While the murderers of the Abbey were slaughtering the proprietors in Paris, the decrees which the revolutionary chiefs wrested from the legislature were undermining the property of the whole of France. On the 1st of September the National Assembly ordered the fabrication of so much paper, that

[1] The Hôtels of the Princes d'Artois and Polignac were completely cleared, and the effects brought to the Hôtel de Ville. *Rev. de Paris*, 14, 498. — [2] Peltier, II. 316. In April only a sum of 6700 francs was found to be protocolled, and in its place a like amount in false bills. B. XXVI. 209.

the Convention was immediately enabled to issue 300 millions of new *assignats*. Exactly three weeks had passed since the Assembly had itself fabricated an equal sum of paper money; those who wondered at such a colossal expenditure, were enlightened four days later, when they learned that simultaneously with an entire suspension of taxation, the extraordinary disbursements of the months of August had amounted to 98 millions—in addition to all the current expenses of administration. When we, moreover, consider that scarcely 100,000 men, in condition for service, were in the field, and that at home there were universal complaints of a want of money for the purposes of military organization, it is clear enough by what channels the greater portion of these sums had been carried off. All the principal political chiefs, too, of this period had their hands in the public purse. As early as the 28th of August the Ministry had received two millions of secret service money, which was almost entirely appropriated, without any account being given, by Danton. On the 4th of September the Proletaries of the kingdom were indulged with 12 millions more for the purchase of corn; on the 5th the Sections received half a million for the equipment of the defenders of the country; and on the 7th the Commune received nearly 2 millions, in addition to the previous 7 millions, for revolutionary necessities. In short, it was perfectly well understood how to direct the newly created paper money—which was draining all the life blood of France—into the proper quarters.

Nor did the Ministry find any difficulty in sustaining this new issue of paper by fresh securities. The lands of the Emigrés already promised a supply of three or four thousand millions; but as, from the very first, some scruples, of which we shall speak hereafter, existed with respect to this property, the more quickly convertible estates of the Knights of Malta, amounting to 400 millions, were added to the more extended confiscation. The ruling faction, moreover, pressed more heavily on the Emigrés at the same moment

in which they left all non-democrats no other choice than between exile and murder. They ordered that no dividends from property in the public funds should be any longer paid to an Emigré; that every father of an Emigré should fit out and support two soldiers (at a cost of nearly 2,500 francs a year) in the place of his son. It never occurred to them to make any distinction between those Emigrants who were in arms in Coblenz, and those who had unwillingly fled, to escape the daggers of the banditti.

Even the old régime had laid too great weight on the balance of the import and export of the precious metals; and the Jacobins, who renewed all the abuses of the ancient system, attached the very greatest importance to their measures against the exportation of gold. On the 5th of September the National Assembly—on the plea that the usurers were endeavouring to starve the people by carrying off specie—forbid the export of gold and silver money; and on the 16th, of gold and silver plate. We must remember here that the Commune had confiscated all the hard cash they had found during the house-searchings, and exchanged it for *assignats*. The prohibition therefore was quite unconnected with any views of commercial policy.

The enactments of the 9th and 16th of September respecting the trade in provisions, struck still more deeply at the roots of the nation's property and welfare. The bread question, as we know, was the practical type of what is now called the social question; and towards the solution of the former the first step was taken, four weeks after the victory of the democrats, in the direction of State-communism. Hitherto the Proletaries had aimed at a fixed and compulsory bread tarif, and the decision in this matter was usually left to the populace of each Commune. They now resorted to a more hidden and universally operative system. They forbade all interruption of trade, ordered a list to be made of all the stocks of corn existing in the country, and instructed the Authorities to compel the owners to send proportionate

supplies to market. We shall see how this first step was followed by still stronger measures for gaining a control over private property.

Such was the attitude assumed by this so-called Democracy in Paris in the month of September; and with such unbridled despotism did it deal with life and property! The Revolutionists attained thereby their immediate political object, in-as-much as in the capital they completely secured the election of their partisans to the Convention. How essential the aid of terror was to their success, and how little they trusted the popular feeling, was proved by an order of the Commune on the 29th, that the nomination of electors should be made by word of mouth, and confirmed by the other Sections. Their object would be gained if the intimidation was successful in 25 of the 48 Sections. But it soon appeared that such precautions were hardly necessary. In almost all the Sections the brawlers of the clubs had exclusive possession of the field, except where a few priests annoyed them with useless opposition. The leaders were almost compelled to moderate the zeal of their myrmidons, who spoke too candidly of the practical object of their plans—the overthrow of property. The Cordeliers observed that luxury began to hide its head in the capital; that silver plate began to disappear. They warned their followers that the time was not yet come to strike the aristocracy of wealth; that the Prussians would triumph if property were abolished in Paris. They therefore exhorted the poor to be calm, assuring them that the day would soon come—the day after the conclusion of the war—when the amount of a man's property would be regulated by the law. This was the most moderate of the views which were broached to influence the primary electors; we may imagine how thoroughly Jacobinical would be the electoral body chosen under such auspices.

Yet the Commune considered it advisable to subject even this body to a suitable amount of terror, so small was the confidence which the band of robbers placed in any French

citizen who did not immediately belong to their mob, or their gang of assassins. It was determined that the electoral body also should hold their meetings publicly in the Hall of the Jacobin club, the galleries of which were constantly occupied by the armed admirers of Robespierre and Marat. Their sittings began just on the 2nd of September, a day on which it would have required no little courage to defy the sovereign People, when it thundered out its approbation or its displeasure from the galleries, in the course of the debates. Short work was made with the few Feuillants who had slipt in in spite of the precautions of the Commune, and who were immediately turned out, thanking heaven to have escaped with their lives. But fresh contentions arose, which strikingly confirmed the absolute necessity of compulsory means for the attainment of democratic objects. On the one hand, the Gironde had so long been the leading faction of the Jacobins, that it was impossible to exclude them at once; and their most energetic and practical members—*e. g.* Louvet and Gorsas, exercised a decided influence on a portion of the electoral body. On the other hand, the Democrats were not entirely agreed among themselves; Robespierre, more especially, was not always satisfied with the measures of Danton and his associates. It was more essential therefore to begin with a resolution that the votes should be given *viva voce* (as in the primary elections), and every election submitted to the satisfaction of the primary electors. After these preliminaries the nomination of the first deputy took place on the 3d of September. This was the very moment when the horrible massacres in the prisons were at their height; the chosen deputy was Maximilian Robespierre. The Girondists flattered themselves that they could at any rate place Péthion, the virtuous Mayor, the celebrated Father of the People, by his side. But they were not even able, after he had been elected in Chartres, to carry an empty vote of approbation in his favour. The next elected were Danton, Collot d'Herbois, Camille Des-

moulins; it was evident that the Gironde would hardly carry a single candidate, although some of the Cordéliers were dissatisfied with Robespierre's implacability, and were inclined to trust Brissot, &c. But whenever an opinion in their favour was expressed, Marat, above all, fell upon the speaker with the greatest fury, denounced the persons proposed and their supporters in venomous placards, and exhorted the patriotic People to clear the ground of the venal creatures of Necker, Lafayette and Brunswick. His own election was, after all, a matter of some difficulty; the debate which preceded it is highly characteristic of Marat's friends and opponents, and therefore of his own position. The Democrats were ashamed of him; he must go into the Convention, they said, not as the wisest and the best of men, but as a kind of leaven to raise the mass. He was brought forward as a candidate on the 7th, supported by his worthy friend the Capuchin Chabot. No one opposed him on political grounds; "but," cried Voidel, "do you wish for a *patriot*, who refused to receive a sum of money due to him in *assignats*, and demanded specie?—a *man of honour*, who when asked for payment by a creditor, eagerly begged his friend Legendre to deny all knowledge of a sum of money deposited with him?—a *blameless man*, who was maintained for two years in a cellar by citizen Maquet and his wife, and who then removed Maquet by a pretended commission, and appropriated both his wife and his furniture?" Marat made no reply, but his banditti growled, "we shall see—the axe is still raised, and we still hold the ropes of the alarm-bell." The Girondists opposed to him by way of striking contrast the English philosopher Priestly, who united the most decided radicalism with a spotless reputation. At length Robespierre declared: "there are philosophers enough in the Convention; instead of bookmakers we want courageous champions—men who have been compelled by despotism to hide themselves for years in a cellar." Danton concurred and Marat became a representative of the nation.

The same result was shown in all the 24 elections of deputies—none were chosen but Dantonists and Maratists of the purest water. The Gironde only carried one candidate, Dussaulx, a weak old man, whom no one could fear. The last candidate was the Duke of Orleans, who was supported by a number of bribed electors, among whom were some Dantonists, and the Girondist Gorsas. But Robespierre and Marat would not hear of his nomination, and favoured one of the ornaments of the Municipality, named Lhuillier. It so happened just at this time, that Marat had the impudence to demand of the Minister Roland a public grant of 15,000 francs for his pamphlet; and when Roland, who was the object of his constant abuse, contemptuously refused, Marat received the money from the Duke. At this price the latter gained Marat's support in the college of electors, so that in the division he just obtained a majority. Even this was disputed; but it was late at night; the Secretaries were tired of the dispute, and therefore declared the Duke duly elected. Thus Philip Joseph entered the Convention, to share in the regicide, and to mount the scaffold.[1]

Most of the newly elected Deputies were obscure but disreputable men, who had no other claim than the fact that they were ready to lend themselves without scruple to all the purposes of the democratic faction. As it had been necessary to employ all the resources of intimidation to secure their election, the revolutionary leaders were fully conscious of the impression which their return had made upon the majority of the citizens. This was so decidedly unfavourable, that they passed over in the deepest silence the resolution previously taken up with so much zeal, of procuring the ratification of the Sectional assemblies. In its stead they determined to call on the Convention to exclude all the deputies hostile to freedom. But what did this party care for the sentiments of the citizens so long as they retained in

[1] Ducoing, *Philippe d'Orleans.*

their own hands the power and the victory? The Parisian citizens might grumble—might assemble in arms in some of the Sections for the protection of property and person, and bring their complaints against the Commune before the National Assembly; but the Municipality continued to put to death whomsoever they pleased, and the capital had no other representatives in the Convention than the men of the Mountain. If they were as successful in the provinces as in Paris, France would be at the disposal of the Democrats; and there was no want on their part of activity and exertion to bring about this result.

On the very same day on which Robespierre was elected, and the head of the Princess Lamballe displayed under the window of the Queen, the agents of the faction were hurrying through all the gates of Paris, to plant the red banner of revolution in the provinces. Their prospects were by no means unfavourable; for the blow of the 10th of August, which shattered the constitution and all existing central authorities, had already produced the greatest confusion in all the Departments. A zealous Jacobin, Jean Debry, described the condition of affairs to the Convention a few days afterwards[1] in the following words: "The way was opened in every direction to audacious crime and selfish intrigue. Unknown authorities were arbitrarily erected in every quarter. The citizen did not know who gave him orders, or with what right the orders were given. One power was raised in opposition to another, and impressed on the incipient rule of Freedom the character of an arbitrary despotism." It was every where the same as in Paris; everywhere the Clubs and the Revolutionary Sections seized the reins of power; all that was necessary was to combine these various elements into one grand whole. Immediately, therefore, after the National Assembly, on December 2nd, had entrusted an unlimited dictatorship to the Ministers, Danton

[1] Sitting of the Convention, Sep. 26. 1792.

caused the nomination of his commissioners to be signed by the Council of state. He summarily assumed to himself the selection of persons; Roland was vexed and angry, but saw himself outvoted, and signed. The persons chosen by Danton, with few exceptions, were members of the Municipal Council, and indeed the most violent, coarse, and unscrupulous members of that body. As more and more notorious characters were successively brought forward, Roland at last withdrew his signature; upon which Danton laughingly asked him whether he was to send nothing but tender maidens. To prevent further delay, however, he made use of a moment when Roland had left the meeting to draw up the instructions. These were precise and simple enough; the Commissioners were to issue to all Authorities, whatever requisitions they might deem necessary for the good of the country; and in the case of corn supplies, they were themselves to fix the price. Besides these instructions the commissioners were furnished with more innocent directions which alone they were to show. Even Roland had agreed to those which treated of their relation to the Clubs, the excitement of public opinion, and the acceleration of the preparations for war. But here too the Municipality of Paris played the principal part. Although it had not the slightest official connection with the other Departments, it named twenty-four envoys, in part the same persons accredited by the Ministers—a simple method of playing hide and seek among the different persons and credentials, in case of any reproach which might be subsequently directed against them. These messengers received their instructions from the *Comité de Surveillance* of the Commune, under the subsequently so well-known name of "Committee of Public Safety." In a circular to all the Communes of the empire, it was announced that the People had destroyed a portion of the imprisoned conspirators by an act of necessary justice, and all "fellow-citizens, brethren and friends" were called on to imitate in their respective districts, this urgent measure

of political salvation. To increase its weight this circular was countersigned by the Minister of Justice, Danton, and distributed in numerous copies through his bureaux. Danton, however, was not satisfied with this; to increase the effect he added a manifesto of his own, in these emphatic words; "Once more, citizens, to arms! let the whole of France bristle with pikes, bayonets, cannons, and daggers; in the towns let the blood of all traitors be the first sacrifice offered to liberty, that when we march against the enemy we may leave no one behind who can trouble us."[1]

Let us consider all the circumstances of the case—the long continued derangement of public and private affairs—the want and unruly license of the Proletaries in all the provinces without exception—the recent example of the latest revolution in Paris—the influence of Commissioners provided with unlimited powers—and, lastly, the express commands of the highest judicial authority, which could on its part appeal to a law awarding death against all who should disobey its orders,—and we shall allow that the preparations for the Sicilian Vespers, or the Massacre of St. Bartholomew, were slight and harmless in comparison with the Jacobin scheme of national murder.

Fortunately in this case the evil contained its own remedy. The democratic leaders, in their struggle with the monarchy, had preached universal license with so much effect, that they could not themselves now reckon on very speedy or general obedience. They were a minority even in the capital, and only prevailed by means of their organization as a government. At a distance their ministerial influence was weaker, and their numerical proportion still less favourable. They could take the Tuileries by a *coup de main*, but to

[1] The letter of the Committee has been frequently published; but this circular of Danton is only found, as far as we know, in Blondier-Langlois, (*Anger*, 1789—1830,) I. 262, from the archives of Angers. It has escaped even the industry of Ternaux.

subject the French people needed years of labour and unutterable crimes.

In some places, and those not unimportant ones, the Commissioners succeeded in their bloody machinations.

On their arrival in Lyons, they found the work already begun; for Laussel's letter had immediately roused the Democrats to action. The desire of influencing the elections was as operative here as in Paris, for the majority of the inhabitants was by no means Jacobinical. But other circumstances were still more favourable to a violent outrage, than in the Capital itself. The Mayor Vitet himself, although a Girondist, and a man of cautious selfishness like Péthion, was of a more active nature than the latter, and was not cooled in his zeal by any personal quarrel with the Cordéliers. The Commander of the troops in Lyons, too, was ready for any sanguinary deed; being, as far as we know, the only French General in the year 1792, who placed his sword at the disposal of the bloodthirsty jurisdiction of the mob. To make this case the more notorious, this leader of the Lyons Septembrists was a German Prince, Charles Constantine of Hesse-Rothenburg-Rheinfels. It is remarkable that this family, whose chief distinguished himself by a merciless severity against the innovators, should likewise produce the most desperate Jacobin who was ever perhaps born on German soil. Prince Charles, or as he at that time called himself, Citizen General Hesse, was about 35 years of age, had a long gaunt form, a pale face, with remarkably high cheek-bones, large but dull blue eyes, and very light hair. He spoke much and rapidly, and accompanied his speech with incessant convulsive gesticulations, concluding every sentence by guashing his beeth, the sound of which was more or less loud according to the state of his mind. "If," said one of his auditors, "his deeds are as wild as his words, one might imagine him to be a wild cat endowed with human speech."[1] The "wild" deeds unfortunately were

[1] Nodier's Souvenirs.

by no means lacking. During the summer we find him continually engaged on the committees of the National Assembly, or among the Jacobins, in bringing information against Ministers and Generals; and on one occasion, in a war-committee, it was observed that Hesse was an indefatigable accuser, but always vanished when proofs were demanded. The friendship of Vitet at last procured him the chief command in Lyons, where he immediately conceived the idea of supplanting General Montesquiou in the chief command in the army of the South, and for this purpose formed an alliance with the Jacobins of Lyons, for mutual support. The attempt to overthrow Montesquiou was unsuccessful for the present, and he directed all his efforts to the furtherance of the catastrophe in the city. Hesse made the following announcement on the 3rd, with great delight: "Liberty or death! Lyons will at length be purified: the Mayor is calling the National guard to arms, and liberating the city from all the disaffected." Six days afterwards the first blow fell: while Vitet occupied the National guard by a grand parade, three priests and nine cavalry-officers, whom Hesse had arrested on his own authority three weeks before, were murdered, and their corpses dragged about in the town by torch-light amidst the yells of the populace. A list of two hundred other victims had been prepared, but the wrath of the National guard expressed itself so loudly, that the continuance of the butchery was deferred: As Vitet, however, always refused to give the order for the armed interference of the guard, the educated classes were so terrified that Hesse wrote to the minister on the 11th. "The catastrophe of the day before yesterday has put the Aristocrats and Emigrés to flight, and given us the majority in Lyons."[1]

It was not till after this that the commissioners of the Parisian Municipality arrived in Lyons to reduce terrorism to a regular system. The murders of the 9th of September

[1] Correspondence of the Army of the South.

only appeared to them in the light of preparatory signals: they aimed at subjecting the persons and property of all Lyons to their will on a grander scale. A commencement was made by plundering the most important magazine of the city. Crowds of women led the way; the National Guard, who ran to arms of their own accord, were imperatively ordered to remain quiet, and the plunder was continued for four days with systematic regularity. Then the women, in the name of the sovereign people, decreed an extremely low tariff for bread, coffee, and a number of other articles, which the Town-Council immediately sanctioned as a law. Finally, at the express instigation of the Parisian Commissioners, a nocturnal house-searching was set on foot in all quarters of the city, and several hundred persons were arrested. The middle classes expected the great massacre to begin at every moment: but even the smaller artisans, who formed the core of the Jacobin party in Lyons, were not yet *au niveau de la Revolution* and refused obedience to their leaders.[1] The latter therefore made haste to hold the elections for the Convention, and succeeded in Lyons in carrying all the desired Democratic candidates, and, in the Department at any rate a majority of republican Deputies.

The occurrences in Orleans during the same days were exactly similar.[2] The arrival of a troop from Paris, which came with the alleged intention of preventing the abduction of the State prisoners, was the signal for every kind of violence and disorder. The prisoners were in the first place robbed by their new keepers of everything they possessed—several criminals were liberated—and the officials who were commissioned to regulate the supply of provisions, were maltreated and threatened with death. The Government

[1] Speech of the Jacobin Riard to the Marseillois on their march. Monleon, I. 136. Report of the Commissioners of the Convention on the 16th of Nov. They complain that even the Constitutional priests were against the Revolution. — [2] Minutes and official documents in Lottin, *Orleans*, 2. *partie*.

commissioner Bourdon gave the signal for all these excesses; so that even his colleague Dubail declared that he only remained in his post in the hope of thwarting the shameful decrees of Bourdon. An order of the National Assembly arrived on the 3rd to send the prisoners to Saumur, whereupon the Parisian army were unanimous in their opinion that instead of this they should be sent to Paris itself. Meanwhile Bourdon's intrigues had rendered the troops of the line stationed in Orleans mutinous, and a small number of the National guard went over to the Bandits. In short, the civic authorities of Orleans, who were decidedly on the side of order, found themselves without any means of resisting the murderers. On the 4th of September the column began its march towards Paris with 43 prisoners, reached Versailles on the 9th, and in that place murdered all these unfortunates but three, in spite of the energetic interference of the Mayor. But Danton lauded the murderers from his balcony, for having performed an indispensable act of justice for the good of the People.

The inhabitants of Orleans soon learned, however, that the Parisian adventurers were by no means satisfied with these results. Their leaders signified this in sufficiently emphatic terms. Bourdon reported to the National Assembly on the 10th; "We have employed every leisure moment in inflaming the patriotism of the citizens, rousing their public spirit, and raising the people to a level with their brethren in Paris. The fruit of our instructions was the destruction of all the memorials of despotism and fanaticism"—*e. g.* a statue of Charles VII. and the Maid of Orleans—"the Abolition of all the external badges of vanity, the epaulettes and bearskins" —just as in Paris the officers and grenadiers of the National guard were deprived of their distinctive insignia—"the transportation of the non-juring priests"—they were forced to leave the city, and on their way hunted like wild beasts— "the formation of a third battalion of 800 men,—and lastly, the establishment of a Central Committee invested with

the absolute power of the sovereign People"?—in other words, a centre of insurrection against all legal authority.

Yet public opinion in Orleans continued to be more adverse to the democrats than in Lyons. The elections to the Convention on the 8th were entirely in favour of the Girondists, and it was not until afterwards that the Cordeliers succeeded in carrying Bourdon instead of Brissot, who had been elected at first. The Cordéliers were all the more active in bringing the question of property to the same decision as in Lyons. The corn riots, as we have seen, commenced immediately on the arrival of the Parisians, and the consequent ferment continued amongst the lowest of the people, and broke out on the 18th into open revolt. A reputed corn-usurer was slain, and several houses plundered and demolished; the Mayor did not venture on any energetic step, although the thievish crowd dispersed with incredible cowardice when a single National guardsman fired off his musket. The price of bread was lowered two sous a pound, according to the desire of the rioters, which implied a loss of 200,000 francs to the income of the city; and it was not until the revolt seemed rather inflamed than assuaged by this concession, that it was determined to proclaim martial law. External order was thus restored, but the rioters remained united in permanent Sections, and drew up a petition to the Convention against the intolerable despotism of the Town Council.

These occurrences give us a clear idea of the state of France at this time; and the course of things was in the main the same throughout the country. The People would have nothing to do with the plans of the democrats; the flames of disorder had every where to be kindled by the Authorities or by envoys from Paris; and the outrages which followed were looked upon with timid disgust by the inhabitants. In Rheims a number of priests and civil officers were burnt alive by a troop of Parisian volunteers, while the College of electors was holding its sitting; and the

threats of the murderers compelled the latter to choose the author of the outrage, a spinner of Rheims, as their deputy. In Sens, the Commissioners of the Parisian Commune caused two young men to be put to death for insulting a tree of Liberty; and they then reported to Paris that the patriotism of Sens was greatly increased by this act, as was urgently necessary. In Meaux, two other Commissioners told the Electoral assembly that the Municipality of Paris had seized the reins of government, that there were no longer any laws and that they could do what they pleased. A few *gens-d'armes* whom they had brought with them from Paris, occupied the prisons, stirred up the artizans and murdered fourteen people. The National Guard was about to interfere, but was prevented by its Jacobin commander. Everything was quiet in Chalons, until Billaud-Varennes arrived from Paris and roused the proletaries; after his departure, the local authorities, aided by the Commissioners of the National Assembly,[1] succeeded in putting down the riot. Sometimes the sentiments of the people were more strongly manifested against the agitators. Thus the peasants of Vouton were on the point of hanging the Commissioners, because they were of opinion that the Jacobins were the cause of all the mischief; and in Evreux they only escaped the same fate by an appeal to the Law of the 2nd, which denounced death against every one who resisted the Government. But even this threat was of no avail in Auxerre, where they were driven from the electoral assembly, after they had related that the Commune of Paris possessed unlimited power, watched and controlled the Government, and invited all other Communes to fraternity. It availed them nothing in Angers, where the Town-council determined to make a complaint before the National Assembly of Danton's circulars; nor in Lisieux, where the Commissioners proposed a new division of lands, and were on that account denounced to the Con-

[1] Sitting of Sept. 11th.

vention. In Marly, in Ris and Champlitte, where the Parisian envoys took away all weapons and horses in the name of the country;—in Bernay, Rouen and Perpignan, where they called upon the people to murder the reactionists—they were even arrested as disturbers of the peace.

In short by the middle of the month it was already known in Paris, that the grand *coup d'état* of the Septembrists had failed. "If any time were left," wrote the Revolutionists of Paris, "the people ought to reverse all the elections." "In every quarter," cried Marat, "intrigues, roguery, seduction and bribery have carried the day in the electoral colleges;" "Roland has scattered gold by handfuls to secure the election of Brissot's scribblers;" "What can you expect from this scum of the Constituent and Legislative Assemblies?" He was not long in finding means to overcome this difficulty: "Surround them," he said "with a numerous auditory—compel them to complete the new constitution within a week —and at the first dereliction of duty deliver them over to the sword of Justice." Such was the respect which the heroes of the People's sovereignty entertained for the will of the entire nation. They were resolved upon new revolutions, until they had bent the inhabitants of France, as well as the King, beneath the yoke of the metropolitan proletaries. They consoled themselves with hopes of the future, towards which the sending of their Commissioners had paved the way. The poorer people of the provinces had not forgotten that even the organs of the Government once approved of the compulsory reduction of prices, and a better division of land.[1] For the present, however, they had the prospect of a reaction and struggle before them, and were determined to use, to the best of their power, the time which still remained before the opening of the Convention. The arrests began again, and were made without any statement of the

[1] Lidon, in the Nat. Convention, Nov. 26th; this cry was reechoed from all parts of the Kingdom.

charge, or of the authority on which they were made. On the 14th and 15th Sept. persons in the uniform of civic officials were seen in several streets, who took away from the passers-by, watches, gold chains and earrings, in the name of the country; and in the night of the 16th the Crown Treasury was broken open and robbed of its diamonds, one of which, "the Regent," was alone worth 12,000,000 francs.[1] A good democrat, named Mazuyer, cried from the tribune of the National Assembly: "Things are worse in Paris than in the forest of Ardennes."

But the result of the elections raised at length the courage of the Girondists. Supported by some of the Sections, they had laid the foundation of an armed force, in opposition to the banditti of the Hotel de Ville; and on the 11th of September they received a report from Péthion, that the summonses to plunder and bloodshed were beginning to lose their effect. With this encouragement they proceeded in the first place to nullify the influence of the democrats in the provinces, by passing a decree on the 14th of September, that the Ministerial Commissioners were strictly to abide by their instructions; and that every Commissioner who should act in the name of the Parisian Commune was to be arrested. On the 17th, the National Assembly directed their attention to Paris; prohibited every unauthorized person from performing any official act, on pain of death; denounced the penalty of imprisonment for every arbitrary arrest, or house-searching, and made the members of the Municipality answerable with their heads for the safety of all prisoners. The consequence was that the Hôtel de Ville dissolved its Committee of Surveillance, and that the democrats in the

[1] Sergent afterwards gave a detailed account of its subsequent fate in the *Revue Retrospective*. The Convention already knew something about them. Yet the *Biographie Universelle* says that the diamonds were employed to bribe the King of Prussia or his Generals, and even names the Berlin Banker Treskow as the person with whom they were deposited.

Sections demanded a new revolt with indescribable fury. For the purpose of inflaming men's minds they spread a report of a defeat which Dumouriez was said to have suffered from the Prussians. Marat, in a bill posted on the walls, accused the General and the Ministers of treachery, and other placards demanded the murder of 400 deputies immediately after the close of the Legislative Assembly. But the plan failed through want of sympathy in the masses, and the zeal of the well-disposed Sections; and the National Assembly hastened on the 20th of Sept. to issue a comprehensive edict for the restoration of order in Paris. It was enacted, that every citizen must be furnished by his Section with a card of citizenship, and that every one who could not produce it should be arrested. This measure drove the strange adventurers out of the city: times were greatly changed since the 20th July, when the Gironde gave the signal for the arrival of the Marseillois! It was further provided that the Municipality and the General Council of the Commune should be newly elected, and that the elections should commence within three days. Every house was declared to be inviolable during the night; the National Assembly was to receive notice of every arrest in the cities where this body held its sittings—the threat of leaving Paris is worthy of remark;—and it was forbidden to fire the alarm-cannon or sound the tocsin, without permission of the Assembly, on pain of death. Lastly, it was decreed that every Section should raise a reserve of 100 men, in addition to the regular companies, to be placed under the command of the General of division, for the preservation of internal order. Every other armed force, except the National Guard, was to be subjected to military leadership and discipline, and could only be employed within the bounds of France by the National Assembly.

By this measure the *Fédérés*, and the volunteers of the Departments, were taken out of the hands of the Municipality,

and a nucleus was formed of a military guard for the Convention.

Thus the Girondists became conservative after the September massacres, as far as lay in their power; quite as much so indeed as the Feuillants a year earlier. They rose against the consequences of their own principles, and succeeded for the moment in producing a certain *police* effect. But it was impossible for them to attain any lasting *political* result, because they themselves did not change their principles, and therefore kept the sources of anarchy still open. They complained incessantly of the immorality of their opponents, but they decreed, according to Condorcet's wishes, freedom of divorce on a simple declaration of the parties. They had regarded themselves incompetent to proclaim the Republic by a decree of the National Assembly, but as individuals they all took the oath of eternal hatred to the King and the Monarchy. We say nothing about the moral value of such an oath; but even political prudence might have told them that by taking it they rendered every other alliance impossible, than that with their deadly enemies Robespierre and Marat. They imagined indeed that they were lost, if the people began to consider them as reactionists: they little knew what an infinite amount of sympathy and hope was eagerly looking for a liberator from the tyranny of the Jacobins!

And thus on the 21st September the National Convention was opened, and the proclamation of the Republic followed as a matter of course.

In deference to the new majority, the two leaders of the Mountain, Robespierre, and Danton, began their operations by a disavowal of their acts in September. Couthon, the most intimate friend of Robespierre, proposed a recognition on oath of the sovereignty of the people; "in order," he said, "to calm the minds of men respecting a report that a party in the Convention were meditating dictatorship, triumvirate and tyranny." Danton proposed a practical recognition of

the people's sovereignty, according to which no constitution should be valid without the confirmation of the People. He further proposed a declaration on oath of the sacredness of all kinds of property, to dissipate the rumours that another party in the Convention were aiming at carrying liberty to the extreme of license.

Both these men well knew what was expected of them. Cambon, who hoped to continue his financial artifices in this assembly also, considered it unwise to give an irrevocable guarantee of property. But the Girondist Lasource explained to him, that property was the essential prerequisite and basis of all law, and thereby succeeded in carrying both resolutions.

The Gironde having thus shown its conservative side, hastened to obtain pardon for its boldness by a redoubled revolutionary zeal.

After the provisional continuance of all unrepealed laws, powers and taxes had been decreed on the motion of Philippeaux, Collot d'Herbois rose to propose the formal abolition of the monarchy. Bishop Gregoire, a so-called independent Deputy, who belonged to no party, but generally voted, like Cambon, with the Gironde, demanded, in consideration of the importance of the question, a formal enactment, with a statement of motives,—in other words, inquiry, reports, and discussion. Upon which one of the most zealous Girondists, Ducos, briefly replied; "The motives are contained in the well-known history of the crimes of Louis XVI." After this, no one dared to raise any further objection, and the Convention decreed amidst solemn silence; "Monarchy is abolished in France." The Assembly then broke out into a shout of triumph, while a troop of 150 Chasseurs defiled through the Hall to the sound of trumpets, and took an oath upon their swords not to return until they had annihilated all the enemies of liberty. The enthusiasm excited by this resolution unfitted the Convention for the

consideration of any other subject, and the sitting was adjourned amidst thunders of applause from the galleries.

It was no mere unmeaning form, that this debate of the Convention was accompanied by military music and the crash of arms, for it decided not only the continuance of terrorism at home, but of war in Europe.

CHAPTER IV.

ONSET OF THE ALLIES.

Weakness of the German army caused by the small amount of the Austrian forces.—Weakness of the French resulting from anarchy.—Dumouriez loses a week by his scheme of invading Belgium.—Servan orders him to the Argonnes.—Taking of Verdun.—Danger of the French.—Dilatory movements of the Duke of Brunswick.—Clerfait forces the Argonnes.—Fresh delays of Brunswick.—Faulty disposition of Kellermann's forces.—Disagreement between the King and the Duke.—Fruitless cannonade at Valmy.—Dumouriez begins a negotiation.—Prussian proposals for a general peace.—Dumouriez strengthens himself.—The French ministry desires a separate peace with Prussia.—Intervention of Lucchesini.

The King of Prussia passed down the Rhine on the 23rd of July from Mayence to Coblenz, where the Elector of Treves amused him with a continuance of the Mayence festivities, and the Emigrés overwhelmed him with promises of the happiest omen for the coming campaign. The army was collected in its full strength of 42,000 in the camp at Rübenach—excellent and magnificent troops, full of confidence in themselves and their leaders, and a joyful eagerness for battle. With such means and prospects, it seemed impossible that the enterprise could fail; the Emigrés rose in royal favour by their descriptions of the state of France; and on observing this they enhanced the colouring of their pictures. They dwelt most strongly on the monarchical sentiments of the People, and boasted of their own good understanding with the enemy's officers. "I," said Bouillé, "can answer for the taking of the fortresses, for I have the keys of all of them in my pocket."[1] Under these circumstances it was unanim-

[1] Minutoli, 141.

ously agreed that there was no necessity for wasting time over the plans of sieges drawn up at Potsdam; that in fact there was nothing to do but to march straight upon Paris amidst the plaudits of loyal Frenchmen. The King listened to these promises with eager ears, for they inspired the hope of a glorious, and yet not tediously protracted, campaign.

The thoughts of the Duke of Brunswick, meanwhile, took a very different direction. He hated the whole mass of Emigrés, and amidst their buzzing swarm in Coblentz he was almost at his wits' end. "He could scarcely find elbow room in the crowd of them; he paid compliment after compliment, and made obeisances to the very ground, but his cheeks glowed, and his eyes glittered like a tiger's." His vexation increased when he saw the nature of their equipment for war, and observed that of the 8,000 men for whom he had to find supplies, about half were combatants, and the rest lackeys, hairdressers, cooks and *vivandiéres*. He suspected the truth of their reports, because *they* were the authors of them; and the more exaggerated the terms in which they described the longing of the French for the presence of their German deliverers, the more fully was he convinced of the contrary. And if the aspect of his *protégés* did not tend to render the prospect of war more pleasing, the intelligence which he received from his allies irrevocably determined his judgment. His head-quarters were visited at this juncture by the Austrian General Pfau from the Breisgau, and the Prussian Major Tauenzien from Belgium.[1] We may remember that according to the stipulations of Sanssouci, Austria was to maintain 50,000 in the Breisgau, of whom 23,000 were to join the main army; while 56,000 men were to be kept in Belgium, the larger portion of whom were to support the Duke of Brunswick by besieging the border fortresses, or by direct cooperation with him. But

[1] Tauenzien had been since the 21st of May at the Austrian head-quarters in Belgium, and was afterwards attached to Clerfait's corps. Concerning Pfau, *conf.* Massenbach and Valentini.

the Duke now learned that the Upper Rhine was covered, not by 27,000, but only by 17,000 men, and that notwithstanding this, Hohenlohe-Kirchberg could only bring up 15,000 instead of 23,000 to his assistance;[1] that there were not 56,000, but at most 40,000 men, in Belgium, of whom General Clerfait was ordered to lead only 15,000 to the main army,[2] while the rest, after subtracting the necessary garrisons, were to be employed in a wild-goose chase to the distant Lille. Austria therefore had furnished only 71,000 instead 106,000 men for the war; and the invading army amounted to 82,000 instead of 110,000.[3] With this force a favourable result was not to be expected, and considering the inadequacy of the force intended for the protection of Belgium and the Rhine, failure would inevitably be followed by a rush of the enemy over every part of the frontiers. If the general desertion of the enemy's troops, too confidently prophesied by the Emigrés, should prove as fallacious as the promises of Austria, the Duke was resolved to abide by his original plan of operations, and only to secure a basis for a second and more energetic campaign, by the capture of the fortresses on the Meuse.

He had always been opposed to the war, but he now viewed it with abhorrence. He had never been famed for quick resolution or bold and rapid action, but now he ap-

[1] Gebler, *Austrian Military Journal*, 1833, II. 7, from the official lists states the number of men under Hohenlohe at 19,700, under Erbach at 9630, and under Esterhazy at 13,800. But Massenbach also gives exact lists from Pfau's communications; all other estimates without exception agree with these; the *Austrian Military Journal*, 1812, I. 7, has rather lower figures for Belgium; and we shall find numerous examples in which the official lists of the Austrians do not always distinguish the actual from the nominal strength of the corps. — [2] Tauenzien's Journal gives Clerfait 14,000—15,000 men, with which Gebler agrees. All other writers estimate the remainder of the Belgian corps at 10,000 men less than Gebler, whom we have followed above. — [3] Prussians 42,000, Hohenlohe 15,000, Clerfait 15,000, Hessians 5,532 (actual strength) Emigrés 4,500 (rough estimate).

peared crippled in every movement by want of inclination, or, at best, goaded on by momentary vexation. He saw his own reputation, and the prosperity of the Prussian State, imperilled in a hopeless enterprise; the more the King urged him on, and indulged in his own splendid dreams, the more uneasy and irritable did his General become. The Duke wished for nothing more than the capture of the fortresses on the Meuse, while the King left his siege artillery at home as being unnecessary, considering the sentiments of the French Commandants. The King was in a great hurry, yet lost several days in the parades and balls at Coblentz, and then scolded all the more at the slowness of the military movements. The Duke rejoiced at the loss of every day, as he did not wish to proceed beyond the Meuse, and feared, if the weather proved fine, that he should not be able to prevent the King from advancing further. And thus the army marched up the Moselle at a snail's pace, taking twenty days to go from Coblentz to the French frontier. The two Austrian Generals did their best to meet the silent wishes of the Duke in this respect. Clerfait did not make his appearance at Arlon until the 16th of August, and Hohenlohe was four-and-twenty days in marching from Mannheim to Merzig on the Saare. Meanwhile news arrived of the revolution of the 10th of August, after the receipt of which the King could think of nothing but an uninterrupted and hasty march on Paris. The Duke gave way so far, that he consented to push forward to the Meuse without previously capturing the fortresses of the Moselle. And thus at last, on the 23d of August, they arrived before the little border fortress of Longwy, and forced it to capitulate, after a short bombardment, on the 26th. A passage for the invading army was thus laid open.

On the side of France little had as yet been done to meet this invasion. When it is asked with whom the fault of this omission lay, the majority of the historians of the Revolution answer without hesitation,—with the Government

of Louis XVI., who regarded the Prussians as their saviours, and naturally enough did nothing to resist the inroad. And they add that the 10th of August had, at all events, the merit of setting the military forces of France in motion against its foreign foes. Yet this view of the matter is directly contradicted by facts. In the first place the Girondist Ministry, which had declared war, did everything in its power to increase the military force, and to arm the whole country. That the results they attained were so small, was not the fault of Louis XVI., who was unable to counteract the very smallest order, but of the dilatoriness of the Assembly in passing decrees—of the want of money, and the general disorder in the administration. Servan, for example, found that the stores of powder in Mezières had been destroyed during the late anarchy; that the gun manufactory of Charleville had only been able, since 1790, to turn out 5,000 guns a year instead of 25,000; that his different measures for recruiting the army mutually interfered with one another, in consequence of the disorder which reigned in every part of the Administration, and at last produced no result at all.[1] When the Girondists were again succeeded by the Feuillants, the influence of the King was not increased. Lajard, the Minister at War, was entirely governed by Lafayette; and though neither of them wished for an aggressive war, as the Jacobins did, yet they were equally averse to submission to foreigners, and the triumph of the Emigrés. We may the more implicitly trust to their assurances, because they could only expect the axe from the Jacobins and the rope from the Emigrés. With them it was a question of life and death, to prepare themselves for an invincible resistance, and thereby to restore peace as speedily as possible. But all the hindrances on which Servan's measures had suffered shipwreck operated against their wishes; and they were, moreover, ex-

[1] Poisson, I. 432, dwells especially on the difficulty of recruiting for the line, at the same time that the National Volunteers were summoned, as the latter chose their own officers from among themselves.

posed to the party hatred of both Girondists and Jacobins, who, as the Prussians were still distant, did not hesitate even to weaken the defences of the country, if they could but thereby humble the hated Feuillants. The correspondence of the Ministers with the Generals leaves no doubt on this point. They vied with one another in eagerness and activity. They devised measures for new levies, repairs of the fortresses, and the instigation of an insurrection in Belgium;[1] but they always end by saying, that the desired object was not to be obtained as long as their resources were crippled by anarchy, and the Parisian *émeutes* occupied the whole time of the Ministers. The work of entrenchment and building fortifications had been going on in every fortress since February; each succeeding Ministry gave increasingly stringent orders to this effect. But what progress could possibly be made when soldiers and workmen were equally insubordinate, and the contractors were continually left without money? Here and there, no doubt, ill-will was added to other causes, since, up to the Autumn, there was still a large number of aristocrats among the officers. But infinitely more was done by the inexperience of the new popular Authorities, who threw innumerable hindrances in the way of military operations by their unauthorized and mischievous interference. The reports of the Parisian Commissioners—who went at the end of August into the Departments,[2] and are in this respect perfectly trustworthy—afford us a multitude of proofs. The result was certain enough, that not one of the border fortresses—neither Metz nor Thionville, neither Verdun nor Sedan, neither Nancy nor Saarlouis—were in a complete state of defence.

When the German preparations began, Lafayette's corps in Sedan amounted to 19,000 men, and Luckner had about an equal number—after subtracting the garrisons—in his

[1] Lajard empowered Luckner, on the 25th of June, formally to acknowledge the Belgian Revolutionary Committee. — [2] Published in part, in the *Revolutions de Paris*, Sept. 1792.

Army of the Centre, in Metz. Rather more than 25,000 men, that is nearly two-thirds of these troops, were regiments of the line; the rest were National Guards, who, however, had been in the field for a year, and in the camp for four months, and were in no respect inferior to their military comrades. It was very evident, that the shock of the great German army could not be sustained by these 38,000 men. Lajard, therefore, in July ordered General Montesquiou to send off twenty battalions of the Army of the South to Metz, and had issued similar directions for Dumouriez with regard to the six thousand men in the camp at Maulde. From these two sources together, the line of the Meuse would have received a reinforcement of nearly 18,000 men, and the total number of forces on that river would have been raised to 56,000 men. As, moreover, all the fortresses were manned, and more than 11,000 men on the Flemish frontier and 22,000 men (besides the garrisons) of the Rhine army were disposable, the chances of the French and the Duke of Brunswick with his 80,000 invaders, were tolerably equal; and there was certainly no need of the Revolution of the 10th of August for the defence of the country.

But we have seen how the patriots of Paris, influenced by party considerations, frustrated the intentions of Lajard. To oblige Montesquiou, the Gironde prevented the sending off of the 20 battalions; to bind Dumouriez to their party, the Jacobins procured him permission to remain in Maulde. In the place of these measures they induced the National Assembly to declare that the country was in danger; and on the 24th of July, after a consultation with Luckner and Montesquiou, they caried a law for the organization of National volunteers. During these proceedings, however, the revolution of the 10th of August occurred, and universal disorder followed this grand *coup* of the Cordéliers and Jacobins. In Paris they had still no other resource than fresh levies of volunteers, and the enlistment of the masses. The men thus raised were collected, according to the suggestion

of Lajard, in a camp at Soissons, for the purpose of being equipped and exercised before they were distributed among the different armies. We have the documents relating to this subject before us, which give a wretched picture of the state of affairs during the whole month of August. There was no lack of recruits;[1] on the 4th of August there were 6,492, of whom a part was sent to Metz and Sedan; on the 21st there were 10,000 men in the camp, and of these, four battalions were sent to Metz. On the same day Servan reported 256 new companies from various districts, whereupon the General of the camp, Duhoux, replied with some consternation, that this addition would make up an army of 20,000, and that he was a lost man if he could not provide for them. The prospect in this respect was a gloomy one; for the great majority there were neither muskets, shoes nor food. They therefore lived at the cost of the peasants, as in an enemy's country; were constantly quarrelling with one another, and crying out against the treachery of the government. The Generals in command deprecated so great an addition to their numbers, which could only diminish the scanty supplies allotted to the armies. They therefore hit on the idea of dividing the camp, and quartering the larger masses in Troyes, Rheims and Soissons, and moving the best equipped to Chalons, nearer the theatre of war, and gradually drafting them off thence to the different armies. Luckner, whose unfitness for active service became daily more evident, was replaced by Kellerman in the Army of the Centre, and entrusted as Generalissimo with the superintendence of the camp. During the months of September he received, in his new capacity, about 1,800 recruits a day; reckoning all together, therefore, we find that up to the 20th of September the danger of the country produced 60,000 men,

[1] Of the officers of these battalions no fewer than 46 subsequently attained the rank of Marshals and Generals of Division. Among them were Brune, St. Cyr, Jourdan, Lannes, Massena, Moreau, Oudinot, and Victor. Mortimer Ternaux, II. 112.

not half of whom could be counted on for active service, and who by no means made up for the loss which the armies suffered from the disorders of the Revolution—from desertion, want of provisions and insubordination. This state of things becomes more palpable when we find that in the months of July and August, 8,000 men were missing in Lafayette's corps, 4,600 in the Army of the Centre, and 4,000 in the Army of the South,[1] without any one being able to say what had become of them. Though these are not quite equal figures to the number of volunteers above stated, the difference was more than outweighed by the inferior quality of the new troops. In short, though the Revolution had done much to excite the feelings of the People against the enemy, it had contributed in a no less degree to render the land defenceless against a serious military attack.

Such was the condition of the opposing powers; the one was so reduced in military strength that nothing but the courage of despair could inspire the hope of a successful resistance; and the other was so weak in the means of offensive warfare, that, under ordinary circumstances, no reasonable man would have ventured the slightest aggressive operation. The Duke of Brunswick was in constant dread of a revolutionary power which had no existence; and the King relied on the alleged feelings of the French people, of which the very contrary actually prevailed. The latter illusion was dispelled quickly enough; but Brunswick adhered all the more obstinately to the former; and his own weakness prevented him from observing the gaps and flaws in the armour of the enemy. This was the course of things during the whole campaign; it was not a struggle of force with force, talent with talent, but a competition of deficiences and errors. A mistake on one side was immediately made good by a still greater blunder on the other. Hence arose

[1] According to the lists, and the Correspondence of the Generals.

a number of unforeseen vicissitudes which filled the campaign with a series of critical situations; these, however, invariably ended in nothing, so that the final result was in accordance with the natural effect of the relative numbers. The longer the attacking, and, at first, superior party delayed, the weaker it became, while the defenders were strengthened by their very retreat. When both parties were in equal strength, the invaders ceased to advance, and immediately afterwards began their retreat.[1]

When the Prussians reached the French borders, General Dumouriez was Commander-in-chief, having been appointed on the 18th of August. Had he hastened to the Meuse with all his disposable forces," according to the instructions of Servan, he might have reached Sedan in a week, and, considering the weakness of the Austrians in Belgium, might have safely taken 11,000 men with him. He would thus have arrived in Sedan during the siege of Longwy, might have retreated without any hindrance to the Argonnes, covered Verdun, and joined Kellermann. An army of 50,000 men would have been thus collected at this point before a single German soldier had appeared on the Meuse; in which case the Duke would hardly have been persuaded to cross that river. The affair would then in all probability have resulted in a tiresome campaign for the possession of the fortresses on the Meuse.

But Dumouriez was far from considering the position of affairs on the Meuse, and of his own corps in Sedan, as particularly hazardous. His extended command only increased the ardour with which he prosecuted his favourite scheme for the conquest of Belgium. Instead, therefore, of

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[1] C. Renouard (*Geschichte des französischen Revolutionskriegs 1792*) has related the particulars of this campaign with great exactness; and has given especially full details of the movements of the Hessian Corps, from written sources.

marching, he asked the Minister to aid him in his purpose by a reinforcement of 20,000 men, and a sum of 4 million francs. "The conquest of Belgium," he wrote on the 23d, "will outweigh the loss of two or three fortresses on the Meuse; Lafayette's flight shows the impossibility of a civil war, and the danger of foreign invasion is not great: the enemy will exhaust their strength before the fortresses, and advance no further." On the 26th Servan replied by sending him express orders to start for Sedan. Dumouriez unwillingly obeyed, found everything in his new sphere of operations in the most wretched condition, and was only still more confirmed in his attachment to his Belgian project. He wrote to Servan on the 29th that no defensive war could be carried on with such troops; that their *morale* must be first raised by a striking success, which was only to be sought in Belgium. To give greater weight to his representations he assembled his principal officers in a Council of War, and laid his views before them. The discussion of his proposal was of no long duration, for no one knew how to meet the attack of the Duke with 19,000 men, or to bring forward a more promising plan. The General dwelt on the exhaustion of the country, the inexperience of his troops, and the superior numbers of the enemy. There was nothing left, he said, but to reinforce Kellermann from the interior, to collect as many volunteers as possible in Chalons and Soissons, and trust to a long defence of the fortresses. Meanwhile the Army of the North ought to make a bold stroke in Belgium, and thereby change the whole character of the war, and carry confusion into the ranks of the enemy. The Generals present signified their assent, and a year afterwards Dillon wrote, "I was entirely convinced by what he said." A few subalterns gnashed their teeth with rage, but they had no voice in the matter. The Council of War sent up Dumouriez's proposal to the Minister as their own; "Nothing but a desperate

venture," the memorial concluded, "can save us in this imminent peril of the country."[1]

So untrue is the statement of Dumouriez in his memoirs, that this Council of War only considered the question of a retreat beyond the Loire; and that he himself pointed out the Argonnes on the map to his adjutant Thouvenot, with the words; "Here are the Thermopylæ of France." The merit of pointing out this position belongs to Servan, the *Minister at War. As early as the 31st* the latter sent a plan of the campaign to the General, recommended the Argonnes to him, where he could assume the character rather of an aggressor than a defender, and easily recruit his strength from the troops on the borders of Flanders. On the following day he repeated, in the name of the Council of Ministers, both to Dumouriez and Kellermann, the order to unite their forces in the passes of Grandpré and Clermont, in order to cover the capital on this favourable ground. He was far from over-estimating the strength of this wooded position; the main point in his eyes was the retrograde movement, by which the corps, hitherto separated, and exposed singly to attack, would be united between Paris and the enemy. In several subsequent despatches he spoke of a position behind the Marne near Chalons, as still better suited to the object in view. With regard to Dumouriez's designs on Belgium, he rejected them for several reasons. He was of opinion, in the first place, that the people in Paris would raise a cry of treachery, and murder him as the author of the scheme; and he likewise thought that the conquest of Brabant would not prevent the enemy from marching on Paris, which would of itself ensure the recovery of

[1] First mentioned by Jomini, then called in question by Schulz, and then confirmed by Joinville from the Protocol of the Council of war (*Spectateur Militaire*, XXX.). We have also consulted the reports of the officers present, General Dillon and Captain Gobert. We are astonished to find that the usually so well-informed Poisson, I. 508, repeats in this place the fable of Dumouriez's *Mémoires*.

the Belgian province. All that Dumouriez could have urged against these conclusive arguments was, that his plan was not founded on the abstract rules of strategy, but chiefly on the certainty that, if Belgium were threatened, the Austrians would immediately recall their corps to that country, and that Brunswick would not venture alone, with 50,000 men into the interior of France.

But before the General could treat any further on this point with the Minister, circumstances imperatively forced him to take the path which Servan had pointed out. Brunswick had spent two days at Longwy, in establishing depots and magazines, and then began his march towards Verdun; for he, like the rest of the world, supposed that Dumouriez and Kellermann were on their way from North and South respectively, with the view of uniting their forces in that place. It was on this account that Clerfait was sent to the North towards Stenai, to check the conjectured march of Dumouriez; while Hohenlohe beleaguered Thionville, after sending forward the Emigrés to the South to protect the flank and rear of the army against Kellermann. By these movements the French forces were in a fair way of being entirely cut off from one another. Dumouriez, who had wasted nearly a week over his Belgian plans, saw himself suddenly surrounded on all sides by overpowering dangers. He was still in Sedan, on the 31st, when the Prussians reached Verdun, sent Count Kalkreuth's corps over the Meuse, and began to bombard the place. Clerfait arrived on the same day with 13,000 men at Stenai, a few marches south of Dumouriez's position, and therefore between the latter and Verdun. The French General now saw that it was all over with his hopes of Belgium. His thoughts then recurred to the Argonnes, not indeed as a position which would decide the campaign, but as the only outlet by which he could escape being entirely surrounded. "My little army," he wrote to Servan, "would be in a mousetrap, cut off from Paris, from Kellermann, and its magazines, if the Prussians

were to occupy the mountains with 20,000 men; I must give up the Meuse, leave Verdun to its fate, and shall perhaps be forced to march to Grandpré on the Aire, and defend the pass of Autry, while a separate corps covers the passes of Clermont." He was not a little enraged at the ill-fortune which had brought him into such a position, but he still attributed it to other causes than his unnecessary loitering in Sedan. "These are the results of your defensive warfare," he wrote on the 31st; "if it had not been for the taking of Longwy, I should never have gone to Sedan; and now I am compromised here, without being able to save anything." But notwithstanding his displeasure, he continued to be entirely free from apprehension as to the final issue of the war. Since he had learned that scarcely 60,000 were advancing against him,[1] the immediate danger only appeared to him in the light of a temporary obstacle in the path of glory. "O that I had but my reinforcements," he wrote to the Minister on the 2nd, "that I might give up this tedious defence, and drive the enemy out of the country!"

If we could imagine the Duke of Brunswick endowed with a few sparks of this restless energy, it is not easy to see how the French divisions could have escaped his concentrated force. And we may add that *vice versa*, his sharpsighted wariness would never have allowed him, in Dumouriez's case, to run so near to destruction: the rash confidence in favouring fortune, with which Dumouriez incessantly imperilled the defence of the country, would have stood the Duke in good stead in his aggressive operations;—especially if his army had been stronger by 50,000 men.

Meanwhile the position of the French grew worse from hour to hour. On the same day, on which Dumouriez wrote those confident words, Verdun capitulated. The works were

[1] According to the report of his spies, which were quite correct, since more than 20,000 men were left behind, partly before Thionville, and partly to cover the communications.

in a wretched condition, the citizens showed royalist leanings, the Council of war lost its head, and resolved to surrender on the evening of the 1st. The Commandant Beaurepaire was found the following morning, swimming in his own blood, with a discharged pistol in his hand.[1] The next day the town was filled with the report that he had shot himself in the midst of the Council of war, out of patriotic despair. It was like the cry of the retiring garrison—"*Au revoir* in Champagne!"—an ominous commentary to the stories of the Emigrés about the royalist sentiments of the People. But Brunswick was still master of the situation, and needed only to stretch out his hand to take possession, in a few hours, of the grand object of all the enemy's movements—the Argonnes. These mountains stretch from South to North, nearly parallel to the Meuse, from St. Menehould to the neighbourhood of Sedan. From the most southerly of its passes—the Islettes, near St. Menehould—Brunswick was at this time ten hours march, but General Dillon, whom Dumouriez intended to send thither, a march of eighteen hours. Count Kalkreuth had advanced on the 2nd to Varennes and Avoncourt, and could have reached the central and most important pass, near Grandpré, in four hours, while Dumouriez was eight hours distant, and was moreover held in check by Clerfait. Even with a view of supporting the siege of Verdun, it would seem to have been advisable to push forward a corps to the mountains, which, in case of failure, could have made good its retreat, without molestation, to the main army.

But the mistakes committed by Dumouriez at Sedan, from a desire of assuming the offensive, were made good by Brunswick's disinclination to attack. As early as the 1st of September, when he was on the heights of St. Michael before Verdun, he had declared his intention not to cross the

[1] *Mémoires* of Gen. Lemoine, who was present and is even doubtful about the suicide.

Meuse.[1] The prospects of a counter-revolution held out by the Emigrés had proved as illusory as the Austrian promise of 106,000 men. The occupation of Longwy and Verdun, the siege of Thionville, and the protection of his communications, employed full 20,000; an equal number would be required for similar purposes during a further advance on Paris, and 10,000 more, at the lowest computation, would be carried off by battle and the wear and tear of the march; what then would become of the handful of men who appeared before armed and desperate Paris? The matter was debated for hours, but was decided at last by the personal wishes of the King. Contempt for the rebels still predominated in his mind, and he considered that he had not yet done enough for his allies; he therefore ordered a further advance into the enemy's country. The more extravagant the boldness of this resolution appeared to the Duke, the more urgently did he deem himself called upon to observe the most solicitous caution. The smallness of his means, which would have disposed a man of different temperament to display the greatest daring, weighed heavily on his scrupulous nature. It is a false conclusion, that because one of two combatants is conscious of an unguarded point, the other must necessarily be able to hit it; and Brunswick was always too much inclined to forget the dangers of his opponent in an exaggerated sense of his own weakness. Added to this was his unfortunate habit of never openly opposing the will of the King, but of carrying his own point by covert means. Had he returned his Marshal's baton to the King, rather than agree to what he considered a ruinous enterprise, the King would hardly have persisted in his purpose. In this case, though no laurels would have been

[1] *Lettres sur l'ouvrage intitulé "Vie de Dumouriez."* According to Malmesbury, (Diary, Jan 24. 1795,) the book appears to have been written under the superintendence of the Duke, and published in England through the agency of Stampford. As far as we know the correspondence of the Duke, it agrees entirely with the contents of the book.

gathered beyond the Argonnes, yet in all human probability the line of the Meuse, with all its fortresses, would have been maintained. If, on the other hand, in spite of his own views, he had adopted the King's plan, and carried it out with zeal and rapidity, he would hardly indeed have put down the Revolution with 60,000 men, but he might have gained brilliant victories over the French divisions. In either case his own army would have remained in good condition, and morally superior to the enemy; and would have formed an excellent basis for a future campaign. Instead of this, the Duke went to work with a sigh, and prepared to cool down the royal rashness by his own tardiness of execution. He directed his searching gaze in every other direction, but not forwards. He was not informed of Dumouriez's movements, for the population,—especially in the villages—who thought that the Prussians had no livelier desire than the restoration of the tithes, kept timidly and angrily aloof, so that it was extremely difficult to obtain spies. In this state of uncertainty, the Duke saw no reason for hastening to the Argonnes, since intercepted letters from Paris spoke of Chalons as the *rendezvous* of the French. He was greatly disquieted by Kellermann's marches on his left flank, and still more so by intelligence of movements in the Army of the Rhine, which seemed to indicate operations on the part of the French in the rear of the Allies. Consequently he would take no step in advance until he had provided for the maintenance of his army for a long period, and concentrated his forces as far as possible. He called in the Emigrés, ordered Hohenlohe to station a portion of his corps before Thionville, and to join the main body with the rest; he likewise quickened the movements of the Hessians, who being ill provided with means of transport came on but slowly.[1] Not until the arrival of the latter in Verdun on

[1] Brunswick wrote to Tauenzien on the 7th Sept., that it was certain that the hostile army was collecting between St. Menehould and Chalons and

the 10th, did he give orders for the resumption of operations; but it was now too late to reap the fruits of the King's boldness, and nothing remained but the perils of an ill-supported offensive movement.

Dumouriez had several days before withdrawn his neck from the noose; as early as the 2nd of September he abandoned his positions at Sedan, Mouzon and Stenai. Dillon, who commanded his van, had a skirmish with Clerfait's Austrians; but the latter did not venture to attack Stenai on his own responsibility, and still less to cross the Meuse. Dumouriez therefore was enabled to reach Grandpré on the 4th of September, and Dillon arrived at the Islettes on the 5th, after a most toilsome march through wood and swamp. The French were not a little relieved to find the desired positions unoccupied. Dumouriez remarked, "If the King of Prussia advances on Paris now, he is a lost man." He began with great satisfaction to settle himself between the wooded hills in the narrow meadow valley of the Aire, which intersects the chain of the Argonnes near Grandpré. The natural advantages of the ground were strengthened by trenches and stockades, and Dumouriez began to boast that the position was impregnable. The chief gain was that a pause in the operations ensued, which Servan eagerly made use of to send forward more troops. The number of volunteers from Paris rose on some days to 2,400; it was the beginning of September, when enlistment was almost the only refuge from the dagger of the Democrats. By the 9th 6,000 of these had reached Dumouriez, and the camp at Rheims promised to furnish 1,500, so that he and Dillon together had now a force of 26,000 men. A still more important point was that, at the urgent instigation of Servan, General Beurnonville at last received orders to lead 11,000 from the camps of Maulde and Maubeuge to Chalons. Gen-

had already thrown up lines in the woods; and that it was therefore of the greatest importance to collect all his forces to drive them thence.

eral Duval, too, was on his way from Pont-sur-Sambre with a corps of 5,000 men hastily collected from different garrisons, which gradually increased to 10,000,[1] and occupied the most northerly pass, near Chêne le Populeux. On the South, again, Kellermann, still farther strengthened by a division of the Army of the Rhine, was approaching with nearly 24,000 men.[2] These corps consisted entirely of troops of the line or old National guards. If the Argonnes could be held till their arrival, a force of 70,000 men would be collected, which would be daily increased by crowds of volunteers; while the enemy, from the very nature of the case, must inevitably melt away at every step in advance. Even Servan had no longer any doubt of the issue; he would himself have preferred a position still farther back, in order to put the failure of the all-important junction beyond the range of possibility; but he was now full of resolute energy and inspiring hopes. "They may perhaps," he wrote on the 4th, "kill a 100,000 of our men, but not many of them shall carry back the news of their chivalrous crusade to Germany." Two days afterwards, he added: "The Americans, in a worse climate, destitute of arms and ammunition, maintained their freedom; why should not we be able to do the same? Let us only pass through the dark hour with courage, and we shall be free, and the last moments of the counter-revolution will have come. These Princes know not of what a desperate People is capable; let them find nothing but ashes and ruins, and annihilate them as soon as winter begins." Dumouriez was still more joyful and enthusiastic, wretched as was the condition of his forest camp. "Of your pikemen," he reported on the 7th, "I have not yet seen a single individual, but I do not intend to make use of them until I am in Germany, when I am chasing the flying enemy before me." "If the King of

[1] Joinville, 379. — [2] 14,400 infantry, 4,900 cavalry; and in addition to these, 4,000 men of Custine's corps who joined him in Toul on the 6th.

Prussia advances towards Paris," he wrote to Kellermann, "I shall hang on his left flank; he will then have you at his heels, and the Parisians in front of him; it will be a miracle if he escapes."

But he had still to learn how dangerous it is to indulge in splendid dreams, and overlook the path which lies at our feet. His position was not a bad one, but by no means unassailable. The Argonnes are heights which rise to the moderate elevation of 330 ft. above the level of the valley.[1] Their best defence is the softness of the clay soil, which in rainy weather turns the roads into swamps; but if we look for impenetrable forests, narrow mountain-passes, or steep and rocky ravines, we shall find no more of these than in a hundred other parts of the subsequent theatre of war, which scarcely gave occasion for the hurrah![2] of a swarm of skirmishers.

If we once more imagine the two Generals to have changed places, there is no doubt that Dumouriez, at the head of the Germans, would have immediately forced the splendid positions of Grandpré and the Islettes at the point of the bayonet; and that Brunswick, on the defence, would have retired, calmly fighting, to his reinforcements, according to Servan's ideas; but he would certainly not have allowed himself to be surprised without means of resistance at any point in the chain of hills. And this is just what Dumouriez *did*.

On the 10th and 11th all the divisions of the Prussian army left Verdun, and marched towards Dumouriez's camp

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[1] A medium elevation of 100 *metres* above the nearest valley; Joinville, 375. — [2] Napoleon's words concerning the weakness of the position are well known. To the same effect St. Cyr, *Campagnes du Rhin*, I. LXV. The Generals of that period had good reason, from the issue, to laud its strength, and were able to do so because it was put to the test of an attack. Of modern writers Ditfurth comes to the conclusion stated in our text. Joinville, from the same data, has a somewhat higher opinion of the position.

at Grandpré. Hohenlohe-Kirchberg and the Landgrave of Hesse, with about 14,000, men watched the Islettes in the south of the main army; Clerfait was on the north, having moved up from Stenai, with 10,000—11,000 men opposite the pass of the Croix aux Bois—between Grandpré and Chêne le Populeux. On the 12th September all the French positions were reconnoitred, for the most part without result; but at the Croix aux Bois Clerfait found only weak outposts of the enemy, and pushed forward his van into the pass. He was indeed driven back again on the 13th by General Chazot, who was sent forward in all haste with six battalions; but on the 14th Clerfait gave him a complete defeat, recovered the pass, and drove Chazot in the direction of Vouziers, away from his communications with Dumouriez. Herupon the French evacuated Chêne le Populeux also, which was immediately taken possession of by the Emigrés. A passage through the mountains was thus laid open, and if Clerfait had pressed forward without delay he might, on the very same evening, have closed the pass of Grandpré in the rear, and for the moment shut in Dumouriez. This would not indeed have ended the affair, since Kellermann and Beurnonville were already so near that they might have come to the rescue in two days with 40,000 men; and Clerfait cautiously halted, and did not venture by himself into the plains of Champagne which lay stretched before him. At all events Dumouriez's position at Grandpré had become untenable, and consequently his whole plan was overthrown.

But he was not long in recovering himself; a few hours after Chazot's defeat, his troops fell into their ranks at the approach of darkness, and made a hasty march towards the South during the night. His intention was to give up the level country as far as Chalons and Rheims to the Prussians, to plant himself back to back with Dillon behind the Islettes, and to call up all the other corps—Chazot from Vouziers, Harville from Rheims, Dubouquet from Chêne le Populeux, Beurnonville from Chalons, Kellermann from Vitry—to that

point. His retreat was not disturbed in the night, and, from the difficulties of the ground in the forest, the Prussians could not have done him much harm. The march of the 15th September in the plains beyond the Aisne was more hazardous. He had only a few hours' start, as the Prussians had entered Grandpré with the early dawn; and in spite of the energy of their commander, his troops recognized their danger, and it soon became apparent that an energetic pursuit would have dispersed the army. Towards midday the hussars of the Prussian vanguard came up with the French rear. At the same moment Chazot's troops, which were likewise on their march to St. Menehould, came in sight on the right flank. When the latter saw the enemy, the panic of the Croix aux Bois was renewed; they broke their ranks, rushed past Dumouriez's rear-guard, and communicated their confusion to the whole main body of the French army. "10,000 men," said Dumouriez, "fled before 1,500 hussars." Beurnonville too, who was moving on the same day from Rhetel to St. Menehould, was also affected by the general terror; he saw Dumouriez's columns from a distance, mistook them for the main body of the Prussians, and drew back in haste to Chalons. Thus, if only the infantry of Prince Hohenlohe, who led the Prussian *avant guarde*, had been at hand, the army of Dumouriez would have been scattered to the four winds. But the Duke would not quit the mountains until he had arranged the transport of his supply of bread through the defiles. He once more made up by his sins of omission for Dumouriez's mistakes. The French General soon rallied his regiments when they found that they were not pursued, and occupied his new camp at St. Menehould on the 17th of September. He remained here alone for two days, so that Brunswick might have attacked him with two-fold superior numbers. The King was exceedingly displeased; "You don't look sharp enough," he said, "you allow the enemy to escape;" guided by a true instinct, he desired a battle. But the Duke was inexorable, and remained for two days in Landres, close

to the pass of Grandpré, where he was busily engaged with the baking and transport of bread. He then devised a manoeuvre for reopening the communications with Verdun, gaining possession of the Islettes pass, and effecting the destruction of the hostile army; and all without bloodshed, perhaps without any fighting, merely by surrounding the enemy and cutting him off from his magazines. This scheme was brought to maturity after slow and hesitating examination of the ground on all sides, but was suddenly interrupted in the very commencent of its execution by the King. The latter had received the false intelligence that the French had begun to draw off towards Chalons, and immediately exclaiming that they should not escape him a second time, he lead his army without delay—not, as the Duke wished, into the mountains, but straight into the plain,—not upon the flank, but upon the rear of the enemy, in the direct road from St. Menehould to Chalons. They soon discovered that the enemy had remained quietly in their quarters, but the troops were now sure that they would at last soon be engaged, and with this prospect they hurried forward with joyful enthusiasm.

Meanwhile Dumouriez had settled himself in his new camp. He lay with his front towards Paris, and the Aisne in his rear, between two small branches of that stream, the Auve and the Bionne, on the ridges which enclose St. Menehould on the West. Before him lay a country much intersected, consisting of marshy meadows. Late on the 18th Beurnonville, completely recovered from his panic, had joined the camp with his own troops and seven battalions of volunteers from Chalons. This force now formed the right wing of Dumouriez's army, which was increased to nearly 40,000. On the 14th Kellermann came up from the opposite side with 18,000 men, so that the French had now the decided advantage in numbers, as Kalkreuth's Prussian Corps was stationed farther back to protect the communications, and Clerfait and the Emigrés did not join the main army till

the evening of the 20th. Before the arrival of the latter, therefore, the Germans were not more than 30,000 strong. The moment was gradually approaching, when the inevitable danger of widely extended offensive operations necessarily made themselves felt. The intrinsic superiority of the Prussian troops over the disorganised soldiers and the undisciplined volunteers, still preserved the balance between them, but the decision could not be long deferred. At this crisis a fresh mistake on the part of the French gave the assailants the last chance of a splendid victory.

Kellermann was to have formed Dumouriez's left wing, and to have carried the line of the army on the Southern bank of the Auve over the heights of Dampierre. By some misunderstanding of his instructions, however, he had crossed the Auve, and pushed forward in front of Dumouriez's position. His troops were thickly massed together on the Windmill hill of Valmy, without the possibility of deploying, with low swamps on one side, a single bridge over the Auve on their right, and the road to St. Menehould in their rear blocked up by their own waggons. When therefore the Prussian columns coming from Massige reached the Chalons road, and then wheeled to the left against the French position, Kellermann was exposed to the whole shock of their attack, and Dumouriez was unable to send him direct or speedy assistance. At 6 o'clock in the morning Kellermann caught sight of the first Prussian troops; at 7 o'clock began the cannonade, which immediately inflicted heavy loss on Kellermann's Curassiers, and put a column under Chazot—which Dumouriez had sent forward on the left near Valmy—to rapid flight. At 10 o'clock one of Kellermann's powder-waggons blew up, upon which—to use Kellermann's own words—the disorder became general, the waggoners ran away, and the front rank of the infantry began to yield. The French officers had the greatest difficulty in restoring some degree of order; but at the same time the Prussians formed three attacking columns, which with great alacrity

prepared to storm the hill, so that Kellermann harangued his men with redoubled zeal, and tried to encourage them by hurraing and waving his hat. We pause for a moment in our relation to enquire into the views of the best authorities on either side, respecting the position and prospects of the opposing parties. "The timid anxiety which pervaded the French troops," says the Prussian General Valentini, "and the calm intrepidity of the Prussians, leave no doubt that Kellermann would have been driven back upon Dumouriez, and both together hurled back into the valley of the Aisne; and what losses must have been suffered during such a flight!" Gouvion St. Cyr, himself a republican general—who even under Napoleon continued to pride himself on his origin—was of opinion, that owing to the insufficient training of the French troops at this period, nothing but a great superiority of numbers, or an impregnable position, could have enabled them to make a successful resistance. "I have no doubt," he says, "that a great calamity would have befallen us, if the Duke had carried out the attack according to the King's orders." The parties interested took the same view of the matter. Servan, the Minister, at once exhorted Dumouriez on the 18th not to engage in any contest, but to retire according to Kellermann's wish towards Chalons and the Marne; "The Prussians are lost," he wrote, "if we can protract the campaign without fighting. Kellermann himself, as we may suppose, does not speak so frankly as Valentini, but he points out instead another no less pregnant danger. In speaking of his detestable position, he observes: If a Prussian corps (and there is nothing to prevent it) were to occupy the heights of Dampierre and Voilemont"—the position originally destined for himself—"we should be entirely surrounded in the low grounds near St. Menehould, cut off from Chalons as well as Vitry, and therefore from all our supplies." Dillon, who still held the Islettes against Hohenlohe, and thereby covered the rear of the French army, regarded this movement of the enemy as so certain, that he directed

his men in that case to fill their pockets with potatoes, and to make their way singly through the woods to the fortresses on the Moselle.[1]

But the very two fold chance of victory seems to have lamed the action of the Prussians. One of their chiefs intended to fight, the other to intercept, and they hindered one another. The King wished to storm and defeat, and never went out of sight of the army; so that those heights were never occupied by the Prussians. But the Duke was determined not to fight under any circumstances, since at the best it must cost him much blood, and he considered every loss as irreparable. He was altogether opposed to the march upon Paris, as a ruinous enterprise, and he feared by the loss even of a few thousand men to imperil his operations against the fortresses of the Meuse, to which he still firmly adhered. When therefore the storming columns had formed in high spirits at 11 o'clock he once more examined the position of the enemy, and then informed the King that there must be no battle. The cannonade continued, the commanders debated, and time passed away. In the evening Kellermann drew himself from his dangerous position, and occupied during the night the heights to the South of the Auve. When the Duke on the following morning likewise pushed forward a few divisions towards the South to threaten the communications of the enemy with Vitry, it was too late. Kellermann's whole army covered this road, and the Prussian demonstration was an empty show.

On the important day of the 20th, scarcely 200 men had fallen on either side. The impression made on both armies was tremendous. The young French soldiers were highly elated at having stood their ground against the warriors of

[1] The Author of the *Tableau de la Guerre de la Revolution*, II. 119, comes to exactly the same conclusion after consulting the minutes of the French Ministry at war. Brunswick had the fairest prospect of beating Kellermann; or, if he had occupied the heights beyond the Auve, of checkmating Dumouriez.

Frederick the Great; but a little while ago unsteady and inclined to panic, distrusting both themselves and their leaders, they were now inspired with the greatest joy and enthusiasm. The feelings of the Prussians were in an equal degree depressed. "We are conquered," cried the old General of Hussars, Wolfradt, "because we have not fought; for what other purpose did we come hither but to fight?" Goethe, whom some discontented officers begged for a powerful expression of their feelings, gave them this very correct, but equally sorry, consolation: "From this day a new epoch in the history of the world begins, and you can say that you were present at its birth." In reality, the crushing of the young Republic was put quite out of the question on the very day of its establishment. After the last opportunity of defeating the French armies singly, at the moment of their junction, had been lost, the daily increasing masses of their opponents—the lateness of the season—the falling spirits, numbers and strength, of the German troops—decided the retreat of the Prussians. Dumouriez had long had no doubt that it would be so, supposing the position of things to become such as they actually became on the 21st. But the boldness with which he had undervalued his own danger, was fully equalled by the freedom from prejudice with which he recognized the powerful means which were still at the disposal of his enemy. The Prussians had not been in any sense conquered; their superiority in tactics was undiminished, and their numbers still sufficiently large to deal dangerous blows. How would it be, he thought, if after breaking through the Argonnes in the North, they were to pass the French position, skirting the mountains in the South, and thus carry the devastations of war into the hitherto unscathed Lorraine? Or what if they were quietly to return by the old route, and suddenly to attack the weakly garrisoned fortresses of Sedan and Montmedy, and by their capture secure themselves winter-quarters on the Meuse? We know that this very thought occupied

the mind of the Duke, but Dumouriez felt himself by no means strong enough to be sure of frustrating either of these enterprises. From the number of the recruits who were now joining the French army, he might perhaps see his force sufficiently increased within a few days; everything would be gained if he could keep the Prussians for this space of time in their present position.[1] He determined therefore, if possible, to obtain this respite by negotiation.[2]

The French General could have no doubt that there existed among several individuals at the head-quarters of the

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[1] Letter to Servan, Sep. 26: "I am trying to raise the number of my forces to 80,000; till then I shall amuse the enemy with fruitless negotiations." — [2] We shall detail these negotiations in this and the following chapters the more fully, because their real purport has been hitherto entirely unknown, and has been the subject of various conjectures and fictions. First, Marat and his associates accused Dumouriez of treachery; then Beauchamp (*Mémoires d'un homme d'État*) made pretended disclosures adverse to the character of Brunswick, which have been repeated a thousand times, and even brought forward again by Menzel. More recently, the Legitimist Michaud has set up a counterpart to the charges of Marat by warming up with wonderful aplomb and numerous details the old Emigrants' fable, that Brunswick, Haugwitz, &c. were bribed by the booty of the September massacres and the crown jewels. Joinville in France, and Stramberg in Germany, have confidently followed his lead. We may spare ourselves a detailed refutation of this view of the matter by giving an account of the actual occurrences from the best of all sources, the secret papers of the negotiations themselves. We have also the confident assurance that no other materials besides those which we have made use of are in existence at Paris. On the Prussian side we have before us the reports of Lucchesini to the Minister in Berlin, besides which nothing of importance is likely to be found. (We have nothing to add to what we have said above, even after the last explanations of Stramberg. So long as Michaud and his associates bring forward no proofs of their inventions, it is childish, in the face of authentic sources to ask for a special refutation of those idle tales, the authors of which might have read the actual facts of the case, derived from official documents, in the *Tableau de la Guerre de la Révolution*, Paris 1808, II. 128)

enemy, a strong inclination to peace. It is true that he had no direct intelligence from the Prussians—for everything without exception which is related of negotiations before the 20th is mere idle fable, as the correspondence of both head-quarters equally proves. Brunswick had once, on the 14th, expressed a wish for a conference, but Dumouriez, who was engaged in his retreat from Grandpré, declined the proposal. But Dumouriez, who had been Minister of foreign affairs, needed no special conference to discover a fact known throughout Europe, that the Duke in his inmost heart would rather have fought against the House of Lorraine than against the French, and that there were other influential personages who felt with him. As to the Austrians, their ardour for war had cooled quite as much as that of their allies. Hohenlohe-Kirchberg had on his side proposed a conference to Dumouriez; he was a simple earnest man, who had grown grey in arms,[1] and never been anything else but a soldier; and he, at any rate, would not have taken such a step without higher sanction. But Dumouriez, who had always shaped his policy on the principle of war with Austria and peace with Prussia, rejected the Austrian proposals without even communicating their contents to his Minister at Paris. But he eagerly seized the opportunity of approaching the King, who alone possessed the necessary power, with the request that he would suspend operations for a few days, and thereby gratify the dearest military wish of Dumouriez.

During the cannonade of the 20th he had ordered General Leveneur to skirt the rear of the Prussians. The latter had fallen in with the weakly guarded baggage of the army, at a point were no one had expected a hostile attack. Vehicles of all kinds, the military chest, baking materials, the field bureau, and military hospitals, were all collected here; and it was only with difficulty that a great disaster was

[1] Opinion of the Duke of Brunswick.

warded off. In the tumult the private secretary of the King, Lombard, and some other civilians, were taken prisoner;[1] and Dumouriez, after liberating him on the following day at the desire of the King, sent him a short memorial through an adjutant, in which the growing strength of the French, and the unpleasant position of the Prussian army, were depicted. It also represented, that a further advance of the Prussians would only aggravate the condition of Louis XVI., without furthering the ambition of the French Princes; and above all, it emphatically declared that Prussia had no interest in sacrificing herself for Austria, her constant enemy, and therefore offered an arrangement, on the basis of the negotiations which had been attempted in the Spring. The Duke immediately took up the idea with great eagerness, and obtained the support of a man whom he had hitherto not exactly counted among his admirers—Colonel Manstein, the General-Adjutant. The latter belonged to a clique of Pietists which exercised an influence upon the King chiefly through his need of ever fresh excitement. Without entirely despising the enjoyments of this world, he assumed an external mien, all the more gloomy and reserved, because, in addition to his sanctimoniousness, he had a still stronger spice of atrabilious ambition, which excited him to an active and suspicious opposition in military matters to the Duke, and in diplomatic affairs to the influence of Bischoffswerder. As a practical statesman he was a sheer egoist and materialist; recognized no other principle than the expediency of the moment, and had just as little feeling for ideal or chivalrous aims, as for any policy founded on principle or considerations of ulterior good. Such a counterpoise might at times have been advantageous to the devoted and generous

[1] We give these details because it has been universally said that Lombard allowed himself to be taken. He would certainly have chosen another place for the purpose. It is moreover certain that Dumouriez took the initiative in the affair.

character of the King, had the mental horizon of Manstein been more extended, and his selfishness on all occasions a patriotic one. He would then have seen that it may in certain cases be even prudent to subordinate for a moment the immediate interests of the State to loftier views. We shall frequently find him engaged in such questions, and exercising great influence; on this occasion, at Valmy, he made no secret of his opinion that the conclusion of peace was urgently necessary. He was quite of Dumouriez's opinion that Prussia allowed herself to be made use of by Austria in an unwarrantable manner; that while the former was incurring cost and danger for an object which concerned Austria alone, the latter only furnished a handful of soldiers, and was sparing and strengthening herself, and intriguing against Prussia in Eastern Europe. With these sentiments he eagerly listened to Dumouriez's overtures. The extent of his zeal was shewn when Dumouriez, on the 22nd, sent to beg for a personal conference in Dampierre. The envoy was Westermann, Danton's Alsatian friend, who on the 10th of August had commanded at the storming of the Tuileries. But even this person, disgusting as he was to the King, did not deter the adjutant. That which most of all induced the King to enter into negotiations at all, was the diplomatic intelligence which had just arrived from Vienna and St. Petersburg. Catharine still withheld the expression of her views respecting Poland, so that the partition was as yet uncertain. The Emperor continued indeed to advocate the cession of a Polish province to Prussia, but he also adhered firmly to his condition of receiving Bavaria in exchange for Belgium, and the two Franconian Principalities besides. It was in vain that the Prussian ambassador in Vienna represented to him that in this way the gain of Prussia would be reduced to null; all that he could obtain was the offer to give Prussia a portion of Lusatia in return for the Principalities, as soon as the Saxon male line should be extinct. Under these circumstances, the war with France be-

came extremely distasteful to the King, and on the 23rd, at Dampierre, he gave his adjutant permission to make the following proposals to the two French Generals, as the basis of further negotiations.

First; the King and his allies wish to have a representative of the French nation in the person of Louis XVI., with whom they may negotiate a peace; which condition, however, is not to be understood as implying a restoration of the *ancien régime* in any other respect.

2ndly; the King and his allies desire that all revolutionary *propaganda* on the part of the French should cease.

3dly; it is wished (above everything else, might be added) that Louis XVI. should be set at liberty.

Here then, we find nothing about Emigrés, or Seigniors or constitutional questions;—nor is there anything which points to the corruption of Dumouriez, or the conclusion of a separate peace with Prussia. The restoration of Louis, and the renunciation of revolutionary conquests, make up the whole Prussian programme. But when Manstein had brought forward these propositions, Dumouriez was obliged to answer, on the following day,[1] by the intelligence that the Convention at its very first sitting had abolished Royalty. It was clear that the Prussian proposals had hereby lost their basis, and that the further progress of the negotiation was rendered extremely precarious. Dumouriez sincerely regretted this; for though military considerations had given occasion to his first note, he regarded peace with Prussia as the focus of all sound policy, and would have gladly taken almost every kind of constitution into the bargain. The matter was not, therefore, immediately broken off; a few messages passed between the parties, for which the exchange of prisoners formed an excuse. An entire week was thus spent, and Dumouriez fully attained his primary object—the suspension of military operations.

[1] Diary of Marquis Lucchesini.

He made use of this interval with indefatigable activity in drawing his reinforcements to his camp, securing what he had already gained, and opening out new prospects. In Chalons and Rheims, General Harville and Sparre had drilled 10,000 men, which raised the army of Champagne to 70,000 men. Dumouriez further urged the Minister to send 15,000 men of the Rhine Army by way of Metz to Verdun—a movement in the highest degree dangerous to the Prussian retreat. In the interval a quarrel with Kellermann and Servan threw great and unexpected difficulties in his way. The former, who claimed all the merit of the victory at Valmy, was irritated by the undoubted ascendancy of Dumouriez; and Servan was incessantly urged in Paris to provide for the defence of the capital; and they vied with one another in pressing Dumouriez to retire from his hazardous position, beyond the Marne. Dumouriez on this occasion displayed his great talents in their full splendour. His position, which on the 15th was perhaps a perilous one, now fixed the enemy to the spot on which they stood; and he was just as little inclined to be driven out of it by the Parisians as by the Germans. He was, at this time, the only man in France who steadily defied the roar of the capital; although the volunteers of his army brought its echoes closely and sharply to his ears. It was no easy task to keep his ill-disciplined, hungry, and quarrelsome men inactive, in a position in which the enemy cut them off from Paris and their magazines, where the supplies were often interrupted, while the negotiation with Manstein appeared to the volunteers a barefaced act of treachery. But Dumouriez was able to attach his soldiers to his person, to keep down the volunteers, to inspire Kellermann with respect, and to enlighten the minds of the Ministers. The advantages of his system were seen in the daily increasing distresses of the enemy. The Prussians were five days without bread; the exhausted land could supply no more. Bad food produced sickness in man and beast; the cold wet weather, which had annoyed

them on the march, settled into incessant rain, which drenched the ground, destroyed the tents, and in a few days spread a murderous dysentery through one third of the army. Under these circumstances the prospects of the French improved every day; and on the 27th Dumouriez was formally raised to the chief command over Kellermann, a promotion which implied the sanction of his plan of operations. An exhortation was added that he should take the idea of falling back beyond the Marne into consideration; to which Dumouriez replied, by return of post, that he should beware of obeying so foolish an order.

He continued his diplomatic exertions in the midst of these military cares and anxieties. He strongly urged Servan not to let fall the negotiations with Prussia. "I confess," he wrote on the 16th, "that in my opinion. nothing would be so important to France as the separation of Prussia from the Coalition. Hitherto I have only played the part of battledore to keep the question in motion; but as the Prussians feel confidence in me as a quondam Minister, I could at once proceed to actual negotiation, as soon as it seemed advisable to you." He would then, he said, demand of the King, recognition of the Republic, evacuation of France, dissolution of the Austrian coalition, and perfect neutrality in a war between France and Austria; and Prussia, on her side, must content herself with a simple intercession on behalf of Louis XVI., without any express stipulations. "I have not, as yet," he concluded, "made any overtures to Manstein on the subject; but I have hinted that it is only in this shape that negotiations can be carried on, and that, moreover, the French care but little about negotiating at all."

These views were received with great satisfaction in Paris, since the immediate danger was past, and the self-confidence of the People knew no bounds. The parties in the Convention thought of nothing but victories, revolution, booty and conquest; and the execution of Dumouriez's Belgian

plan was among the most cherished hopes of Danton as well as of Lebrun. Nothing would conduce more to its success than a rupture of the European coalition by a separate peace with Prussia. And what a triumphant satisfaction would it be, if, in addition to the confidently expected successes against Austria, they could win over the Prussian Monarch to the side of the Revolution! To effect this latter purpose, they considered that they had allurements enough to offer, and the negotiations were therefore zealously resumed, but with the deepest secresy. In deference to the Convention and the Jacobinical theorists, the Council of Ministers decreed that Dumouriez should not treat with the enemy until they had evacuated the soil of France; but Westermann and Benoit were secretly despatched to the Prussian head-quarters, to conclude, if possible, a separate peace. Dumouriez, meanwhile, had endeavoured to prepare the way. The proclamation of the Republic had not yet cooled the zeal of Brunswick and Manstein. On the 26th the arrangement for the exchange of prisoners was completed, in which Prussia made the important concession of silently passing over the Emigrés. Still however the King showed no inclination to desert the Coalition; and Dumouriez, who gradually began to doubt of success, determined to press this all-important point.[1] On the 27th he handed to Colonel Manstein a new memorial for the King; in which he made the separation of Prussia from Austria his sole theme, and purposely expressed himself in sharp and strong language, in order to test thereby the real inclinations of Prussia.

But he had chosen a most unfortunate moment for this communication. The day before, the Marquis Lucchesini—who, since the return of the Minister Schulenburg to Berlin, had managed the diplomatic business at head-quarters, but had been absent for a few days in Verdun—had again been with the King, and had completely changed the appearance.

[1] *Il ne faut pas*, he wrote, *que ceci dégenère en fourberie royale.*

of affairs in that quarter. He was a brother-in-law of Bischoffswerder, but an intimate friend of Manstein. Like the latter, he regarded the Austrian alliance which the former had concluded, as a folly; but he also considered that his military colleague had thoughtlessly entered on a path which could lead to no result at all. The first thing that Lucchesini remarked was that Dumouriez had shown no credentials from his Minister; nay, that in the present anarchical state of Paris, it was doubtful whether the Minister himself had the power to conduct such a negotiation. He then dwelt upon the fact that Dumouriez alone derived any advantage from the previous truce, which rendered his sincerity doubly questionable, while nothing was more certain than that the very appearance of treating with the enemy would place Prussia in a false light in the eyes of her allies. The truth of these representations forcibly struck the King—who was, however, entirely cured of his war fever, and extremely desirous of an honourable settlement—and he thought that he had been very inconsiderately involved in dealings with the Republicans. In this mood he received the memorial of Dumouriez, which was very ill adapted for its purpose; the King was extremely angry when Dumouriez—in speaking of Prussia's adhering to the Coalition—said, among other things, that he (the King) would thereby sacrifice the weal of his State to an illusory sentiment of honour. Manstein was told to reply, that Dumouriez was welcome to his own principles, but that the King regarded fidelity to his allies as his highest duty. High words were exchanged on this point, and the King, to use Lucchesini's polite expression, "was not restrained by his kindness of heart from expressing in strong language his displeasure with the Colonel," as the originator of such a negotiation. A portion of the royal anger fell on the Duke of Brunswick, who was compelled to issue a new manifesto on the 28th, in which he repeated all the threats of July against the French. The King himself was desirous of renewing hostilities without delay; the Emigrés were in

raptures, and the Russian *chargé d'affaires*, Prince Nassau-Siegen, offered to beg his Empress to send a Russian army to join in the Spring campaign. But even the Duke, in spite of his temporary loss of favour, did not find it difficult to hinder any active proceedings, as the relative position of the two armies was entirely changed since the 20th. In an engagement with sick and exhausted troops against an enemy double in number, nothing could be looked for but entire defeat. On this head Lucchesini entirely agreed with the Duke, and the idea of a battle was abandoned as soon as mooted.

If the Prussians were not to fight, their retreat became every moment more urgently necessary. It was already sufficiently dangerous for them to make their way through the boggy passes of the Argonnes, with an army in superior numbers on their flank. Benoit and Westermann arrived at an opportune moment. If Dumouriez had hitherto reaped all the military advantages of the truce, it was now the turn of the Prussians to lessen the evils of their retreat by skilfully prolonging the negotiations.

CHAPTER V.

RETREAT FROM FRANCE.

First party contests in the Convention.—All parties in favour of war and conquest.—Propaganda in Italy and Switzerland.—Montesquiou in Savoy.—Attempt upon Geneva.—Custine in Spires and Frankfort.—Dumouriez and Kellermann in favour of peace.—Fruitless negotiations for a separate peace.—Brunswick's plans against the Meuse fortresses.—Recall of the Austrian troops.—Conduct of Francis II.—Spielmann's mission to head-quarters.—Negotiations at Luxembourg.—The Merle note.

During the first days of the Convention, the Gironde, which had lately had to tremble for its very existence, possessed no small prospect of acquiring absolute supremacy in France. It predominated in the Ministry, because Danton, when chosen member of the Convention by the Electors of Paris, had resigned his *portefeuille*, and Roland's influence subsequently prevailed in home affairs. The Gironde could likewise, in most cases, reckon on a majority in the Convention itself. Most of the elections had been carried in direct opposition to the aims of the Parisian Commune and the Septembrists; against whose dictatorship there was a general feeling, which would have enabled the Gironde, had they made use of all the means in their power, at once to crush their opponents. The Jacobins could not conceal this fact from themselves. "All France is against us," said the younger Robespierre on the 29th in the rostra of the Jacobin Club, "our only hope lies in the citizens of Paris."[1] Whereupon Desfieux raised his warning voice and said: "Friends and associates, do not place too much confidence even in this last prospect; it is only too certain that even here in Paris we should be beaten

[1] Buchez, XX. 300.

in any election which was made by secret vote." The Club therefore prescribed to itself the strictest caution, and an almost timid attitude of defence. The September murders were never mentioned except with the intention of partly denying, and partly excusing them; and Collot d'Herbois was looked upon as an incautious man, when he, on one occasion, exclaimed without any circumlocution. "The 2nd of September is the creed of our party."

But though the majority of the Convention was no doubt hostile to the Jacobins, it was not yet fully under the guidance of the Gironde. It was a similar case to that of the defunct Assembly; by far the greater part of the Deputies kept aloof from all party discipline whatever, and each individual voted according to his impressions at the moment. Only about 30 adhered unconditionally to the Girondist party, and we shall see that even these frequently took different sides on the most important questions. The removal of this disadvantage ought to have been all the more zealously aimed at, because the Mountain held together like one man.

Nearly all the members of the Convention held revolutionary opinions. The measures taken by the Commune of Paris and its associates in the Provinces, had at any rate effected thus much, that the adherents of the *ancien régime*, and the professed constitutionalists, had refrained from taking any part in the Elections. Even La Vendée—which was soon to manifest in the most violent manner the opinions and feelings of its entire population by a royalist revolt—had elected radical deputies. The Gironde, too, sympathised in the democratic tendencies of the majority of its colleagues; it was only in so far conservative, as it feared the daggers of September for itself; in all other respects it still retained its destructive principles. It was not therefore in a condition to rally round it the other parties of the Right,—the Constitutionalists and Priests, the Royalists and Feudalists—for the struggle against the Jacobins; and by

most of its legal enactments it undermined every inch of ground which it had gained from the extreme Left by its Police decrees. In such a position of affairs, the most natural course would have been a reconciliation of the two parties on the basis of a fair division of personal influence; for this last was the only essential point of dispute. There was scarcely any difference of opinion as to the objects to be aimed at—only as to the means to be employed. An attempt in this direction was really made in the first days of the Convention; the party leaders held a meeting, and Danton, especially, exhorted them to concord. But the blood of September flowed between them; the Girondists demanded revenge for the threats directed against themselves, and rejected the proposal of a mutual amnesty almost as a crime; whereupon Robespierre abruptly and haughtily broke up the conference.

On the 22nd, the Convention ordered a new election of all the Government officials throughout the whole of France. Before the month of August, almost all the Departmental authorities had manifested constitutional opinions, and were consequently abolished together with the constitution which they represented. On the 23rd, Danton carried a similar decree against the legal functionaries. Billaud wished to do away with the Courts of law altogether, since, he said, two umpires, named in each case by the contending parties, would answer every purpose. He did not carry his point, yet the choice of law officers was no longer restricted to professional lawyers, on the ground that they formed a particularly scandalous Aristocracy.

After this specimen of its democratic sentiments, the Convention heard an address from the Minister Roland on the general state of the country. His report was a melancholy testimony to the effects of the Revolution, and told of the crippling of agriculture, the ruin of manufactures, the annihilation of commerce, and the decay of national institutions and public edifices. At the same time he gave in

every sentence, the signal of attack on the Mountain, by designating their intrigues and carelessness as the sole sources of the evil, and demanding hired troops for the protection of the Convention and the Government. On the following day Kersaint and Buzot, in accordance with the suggestions of Roland, brought forward motions—the former for the enactment of a penal law against the instigators of murder and homicide, and the latter, for the formation of a guard for the Convention raised from all the Departments. Both proposals were referred to a Committee. An attack was then made on individuals: Barbaroux and Buzot resuscitated the story that Robespierre, on the 9th August, had had himself proposed to the Marseilles *Fédérés* as Dictator. The Girondists, in their turn, were accused of wishing to cut up France into a number of independent States, on the American pattern. They replied that the Parisians were striving to domineer over the Departments, as Rome had formerly done over the Provinces; and then they themselves caused the unity and indivisibility of the Republic to be formally decreed. These contentions had no other result than to increase the general exasperation; and the attention of each and all was soon solely directed to the material forces of either party. On the one side was the Commune of Paris —whose zealous proletaries were greatly dreaded by the mass of the Deputies—and on the other, the Guard of the Convention, by means of which the Gironde hoped to gain, in the first instance, security of voting, and as a natural consequence, to effect the complete overthrow of their opponents. Buzot brought up the report on this question on the 8th October; it was ordered to be printed and was then dropped. The Gironde had observed that a great number of Deputies feared to vote for this measure, which was execrated in Paris; they therefore had recourse to the expedient of sending—without the sanction of the law—for armed troops from the Departments friendly to them, by whose protection they sought to encourage their adherents.

It was Marseilles again which took the lead, and now raised soldiers for the Government in October, as it had done for the Revolution in July. Meanwhile the Municipality of Paris was tormented in every way; an inquiry was ordered into its enormous robberies and embezzlements; the Minister of Justice was commissioned to institute a general investigation respecting the September massacre, and in the new elections of the Commune, the principle of secret voting was strictly carried out. Péthion was actually chosen Mayor by a large majority, and when he preferred to keep his seat in the Convention, another candidate of the Girondist party, the Physician Chambon, was elected in opposition to the Jacobin Lhuillier. Nine-tenths of the citizens, however, abstained from voting.

And thus the Gironde up to the end of October made continual progress; but they had not gained any success of such importance as to guarantee the future. That which aided them most effectually was the arrival of the new *Fédérés;* for such a listless indifference prevailed about internal politics, that a few thousand sturdy arms sufficed to inspire respect into the Jacobin bands. But what a melancholy expedient was it to have to defend the cause of order by such purely anarchical means! Roland was well aware of this, and aimed at the very centre of the evil by repeatedly demanding that the powers of the Ministry should be increased, and the Municipality deprived of the right of calling out the military. But his colleagues considered these measures either unattainable in the Convention, or inconsistent with their previous political attitude; at all events no proposition on the subject was ever brought forward.

The Jacobins were, therefore, doubly glad that the finances of the State continued to be administered as heretofore. Clavière was once more Finance Minister; and although, like his Girondist friends, he would not hear of any formal abolition of property, or of fixed prices, forced currency, and *prehensions.* (arbitrary exactions from French citizens by Civil

authorities)—yet he did everything else in his power to shake the influence of property, and to lead the State by constantly increasing demands on the public resources, into the paths of wholesale robbery. On the 19th of October, the plunder of the Emigrés was continued, with the unanimous consent of the Convention, by an order to all bankers and notaries, on pain of death, to hand over all the money and valuable papers entrusted to them by the exiles to the Public Exchequer. All the public Civil authorities had already, on the 30th of September, been made answerable for the sale of the confiscated estates; and when, a little later (17th Nov.), Manuel suggested that a difference ought to be made between the Cavaliers of the Court of Coblenz, and those who had fled on the 2nd of September, he was told that it was now a question of the necessities of war, in which it was impossible to attend to mere distinctions of law and justice. For the better security of the booty, it was ordained (Oct. 23rd,) according to the proposition of Buzot, that the punishment of death should be inflicted on every Emigré who was caught upon the soil of France. The application of the wealth thus gained was analogous to the course pursued in the financial administration of the former Assemblies. The city of Paris received first six, and then three millions, for the support of the needy classes. Clavière increased the number of small *assignats;* and the Convention decreed a new issue of 400 millions. The Girondists could make no objection to these measures, because they knew of no other means of meeting the ever-increasing expenditure. There was, it is true, one expedient by which the State could be freed from a monthly outlay of 100 millions; and this was the conclusion of peace—an expedient which, since the 20th of September, the inclinations of the King of Prussia placed entirely within their power. But on this point the Mountain and the Gironde were fully agreed; for they all had the same ardent impulse towards universal freedom and universal conquest. It is evident that a party

which was at that time preaching about order and property in France, was only digging its own grave by endeavouring to spread anarchy and financial exhaustion through the whole of Europe.

As we have said above, there was no difference of opinion among the parties on this head. Danton and his associates, the Girondists Brissot and Clavière, and Dumouriez's friend Lebrun, had all the same ideas respecting the revolutionary metamorphosis of Europe, as the demagogues of the Hôtel de Ville, and the fanatics of the Jacobin club. The annihilation of all Kings, the republicanising of all countries, and their union with France, were the only political views which could safely be expressed in Paris. These ambitious ideas of taking the world by storm were universally diffused. If Prussia could be lulled to sleep, the overthrow of the German Empire was considered as secured. On the appearance of a French army and fleet, a revolution might be expected to break out in Switzerland and Italy. By a second naval force it was hoped that the Turks might be roused to a fresh war against the two Imperial Courts. England shewed herself at present cautious and desirous of peace; and, at the worst, the French reckoned even there on the aid of a republican party, and above all of oppressed and agitated Ireland. What would then be left in our quarter of the world of the old state of things?

The first steps in this direction were taken as early as September. Since the 10th of August, the Ministry had been constantly urging General Montesquiou to put into execution the long-planned attack on Savoy, by which the flames of war were to be kindled at once through the length and breadth of the Alps and Appenines. The most encouraging intelligence was received from all parts of Italy. The diplomatic agents whom Dumouriez had sent out in Spring were indefatigable at their respective posts. Henin wrote from Venice that an obstinate resistance would be met with in Germany, and that the Germans would after all only be

conquered in Italy. He said that a French fleet ought to sail for Spezzia, from which it should send an army by way of Sestri to Parma, Modena and Piacenza; that Parma would furnish supplies in abundance, Piacenza heavy artillery, and Modena treasure to the amount of several millions; that neither Milan nor Mantua could resist such a plan of operations, if rapidly executed, and that the Papal towns of Bologna and Ferrara would hail the French as liberators. He added that if a second fleet were to make itself master of the mouths of the Po, it might occupy Ravenna and Ancona, and overpower weakly-defended Venice, almost without a blow; and that though this plan would be costly in the first instance, the French armies would subsequently be plentifully supplied by Italy, and the fate of Europe be at once decided.

While reading these schemes, we fancy ourselves transported into the year 1796, and the head-quarters of the youthful General Buonaparte. Proposals and reports of a similar nature were sent in by Salicetti from Corsica respecting the Island of Sardinia, by Semonville from Genoa respecting Piedmont, and by Chateauneuf from Geneva respecting Savoy.[1] In all quarters they were canvassing the native population for the liberation of the people by means of a French invasion. Henin reported on the 18th August, that he had formed bands of trustworthy and zealous adherents in several parts of Italy, who only waited for the signal to raise the standard of revolt. A secret understanding was maintained with a party in most of the towns of Savoy; and in Geneva Clavière's correspondents Dassier and Flournoy[2] were actively engaged in raising the enfranchised citizens, and other inhabitants, against the Patricians. This was a favourite object with Clavière, as he, a native of Geneva, had been expelled from that city in 1782 by the

[1] All in the Military archives in Paris; *Armée du Midi.* — [2] Montesquiou, *Mémoire justificatif.* Clavière's answer to it.

Aristocrats, and now hoped to satisfy his long-cherished vengeance. He gained over Servan to his plans, by giving information of a stand of 20,000 muskets in the arsenal of Geneva; and Cambon, by a reference to the three million francs in the Genevese treasury; he likewise took upon himself to find some pretext of international law to justify the meditated attack. Intrigues of a similar kind were extended into Switzerland. The French Ambassador Barthelemy, a skilful man who pursued his ends with noiseless caution, gained over a considerable number of adherents, especially among the younger men in Berne and Zürich, and carried on a correspondence in all the Cantons. His overtures met with a favourable reception in all the towns from the mercantile classes, who in the course of trade had come into possession of many French *assignats*, and were afraid of losing by them in the event of a victory of the Allies.[1] The Government of Berne was the only one which had any clear insight into the future, and saw that they had only to choose between the suppression of the French, and the outbreak of a Helvetian, Revolution. They would therefore have preferred to join the German side with all their forces, but were restrained by the smaller Cantons, who wished for peace at any price.

It was upon this state of affairs that the French Government of August the 10th founded their hopes of success in the South of Europe. Montesquiou was forthwith to begin the invasion of Savoy, and march thence, without a moment's delay, upon Geneva, and thus threaten Italy and Switzerland at once. General Anselme, under his orders, was then to occupy the province of Nice, and Admiral Truguet to reconnoitre the coast for a favourable point of attack. The sending off of 10 battalions to Luckner, however, caused an unexpected delay. Montesquiou had to report that the raising of recruits went on but slowly. "I have not caught

[1] Bouillé, *Mémoires*. Mallet du Pan.

sight of a man," he said; "the citizens are too much engaged in public assemblies, and meetings of electors." Other disturbances of a still more serious kind arose from the intrigues of the Prince of Hesse, who wished for the chief command himself, and therefore accused Montesquiou in Paris of being a royalist and an aristocrat. This was going on in the last days of August, and Servan gave Montesquiou to understand that public opinion, which had now become an incalculable power, was turning strongly against him. On the 29th the Council of Ministers decreed the removal of the General, and Servan ordered him for the present to suspend all further action. Immediately afterwards the Minister received a despatch from Montesquiou of September the 4th, in which he said that he could no longer restrain the martial ardour of his troops, but could guarantee complete success in Savoy, and therefore earnestly begged permission to begin his march. Hereupon the Ministry withdrew their former decree; but the interruption had been made and Montesquiou needed an additional fortnight before he could open the campaign. He was however in high spirits, and sent word to Clavière, on the 11th, that all would go well, and that by the 1st of October he would appear before the gates of Geneva. Clavière immediately wrote to Flournoy that the liberation of that city from the tyranny of the Aristocrats was resolved on, and that nothing but immediate surrender could save it. His object in doing so was to induce Geneva to solicit aid from Berne, which would afford an opportunity for intriguing on an extended scale. The whole scheme would have been attended with uninterrupted success, if Montesquiou had still acted in full concert with the others. But the Prince of Hesse continued to attack him with redoubled bitterness; and went at last so far as to publish accusations against him in a widely circulated Girondist journal. When sharply called to account for this proceeding by Servan, the Prince replied: "I am not such a fool as to bring forward charges unsupported by

proofs; I abide by my declaration that Montesquiou is a traitor; if you take offence at my plain language, you are not worthy of your office; do me justice or I shall make an appeal at the bar of the Convention." This was written on the 22nd; on the 23rd, Danton declared in the Convention that Montesquiou must not remain at the head of the Army.

But for once the soldier got the start of the demagogue. During the night of the 21st, Montesquiou occupied the pass of San Parelliano on the Isere with 19,000 men; the Piedmontese, who were 15,000 strong, made no attempt at resistance, but withdrew in two columns to Montmelian and Annecy. They were in fact quite unprepared and irresolute, notwithstanding the many months which the French had spent in getting ready for the field. Their King, it is true, had long inclined to the Coalition, but Austria had met his overtures with the inveterate suspicion with which she had always regarded Piedmont. In the summer he received from Vienna the curt declaration, that it was a matter of absolute indifference to the Powers whether he took part in the invasion of France or not.[1] It was with difficulty that he at last obtained a promise, that in case the French assumed the offensive he should receive the aid of 8,000 Austrians from Milan. As, however, he was to maintain and pay them, he had neglected from parsimony to send for them, and therefore found himself defenceless at the decisive moment. On the 25th the French were at Chambery; whereupon the Sardinians evacuated the whole province, with the exception of the Tarantaise. During the same time General Anselme took possession of Nice with 10,000 men, without a blow being struck. The inhabitants, whom Montesquiou had called on "to desert their tyrants and enjoy the blessings of peace in their cottages," responded to the summons with friendly readiness; every thing seemed to be going on well. A detachment was already on its way to Carouge in the im-

[1] Reports of Van Haeften, Dutch Ambassador at the Court of Vienna.

mediate neighbourhood of Geneva, in order, according to Montesquiou, to inspire fear into the aristocrats, and to make a diversion in favour of the democratic party. Geneva, thus directly threatened, hesitated no longer to apply for aid to the confederate state of Berne. Steiger, the Landamman, immediately sent off 1,600 men, and ordered that a corps of observation of 9,000 men should be drawn together in the canton of Vaud—a force quite sufficient for the present security of Geneva.

In the face of these brilliant successes, of course, the ridiculous charges of treason against Montesquiou could not be maintained, and on the 8th of October the decree of dismissal was for the second time withdrawn. But his late experiences had a very cooling effect on the General himself. He was not by nature a bad man, only weak and vain. Party spirit and the thirst for fame had carried him away for a time, but he now returned to the paths of simple duty. The claim of modern despotism, that the obedience of the soldier should be limited by the precepts neither of religion nor morality, had not, at the period of which we speak, become a maxim of State policy; and least of all in the French army, which had so lately heard from its existing rulers the praise of the unconditional duty of insurrection. Montesquiou was resolved to omit nothing which could further the real military interests of France, but not to demean himself to any robbery *à la Clavière*. In the exercise of his command, therefore, he soon came into conflict with his Government at almost every point.

The proceedings of Anselme at Nice were highly agreeable to the taste of Danton and Cambon. In his opinion the catholic peasants, were not at all *au niveau de la revolution*, and consequently undeserving of its benefits. He had entered the country as a friend and liberator, but he took possession of it in the name of France, appointed new magistrates, and devastated the land by his exactions in a worse manner than could have been done by a bloody

war.[1] He then, in the same way as Montesquiou had done at Geneva, marched upon the equally neutral and still richer city of Genoa, and with peremptory threats demanded a loan of 31 million francs. Montesquiou was enraged at this, partly from his sense of justice, partly from policy; but when, under the influence of these feelings, he made communications to the new Minister at war, Pache, the latter immediately made Anselme independent of his command, and associated with him three like-minded Conventional Commissioners for the management of civil affairs. The exactions were made as heretofore; while, on the other hand, essential military measures, such as the taking of the important pass of Saorgio, were neglected.

All the more strictly did Montesquiou, at least in form, adhere in Savoy to the original programme. The royal officials were removed, but the inhabitants were called on to choose their successors. Meanwhile numerous envoys of the Government, and of the Jacobins, arrived from Paris, who instituted affiliated clubs, and immediately mooted the question whether Savoy would not prefer to join the great French family, rather than continue in its own narrow independence. In some districts a feeling in favour of such a union was manifested, but in Paris the clear-headed Servan was opposed to it.[2] Bancal, too, warned the Convention against a policy of conquest which would involve France in endless broils; and Louvet urged that at any rate the Savoyards should be allowed to exercise a real and undisturbed choice. To which Danton[3] replied, that if a nation was silly enough to adhere to a bad constitution, France ought not to yield to its wishes; that moreover the Convention ought to constitute itself as a grand committee of rebellion against all Kings, and appoint a smaller committee to take into consideration the means of bringing about a universal

[1] Servan's own words. — [2] Despatch to Montesquiou, Sept. 29. — [3] Sept. 28th.

revolt of the Peoples of Europe. The Convention took the question into consideration, and referred it to the Diplomatic Committee.

The affairs of Geneva became more complicated. In the year 1782 France, Switzerland and Sardinia, had suppressed disturbances in that city, and had concluded a treaty with it to the effect, that in future the three States should only intervene in its affairs in concert. That now, without the permission of France, those 1,600 Swiss had marched into Geneva, was considered as a breach of contract, and it was with a view to this very breach that Clavière had taken his measures. The Genevese excused themselves by the peculiarity of the case, and appealed to former treaties, according to which, in the event of a war between two of the protecting Powers themselves, the town would have the right of guarding its frontier by the aid of the third. But France was inexorable. The French *chargé d'affaires* was recalled, and Montesquiou received orders to drive the Swiss troops, by force if necessary, out of Geneva, but otherwise to respect the independence of the Republic, and only to demand the punishment of the offending magistrates. To these orders were appended secret instructions to seize the 20,000 muskets, to destroy "the nest of Aristocrats," as Clavière called Geneva, to get hold of the money which had been carried there for security, and by all means to leave a garrison of 4,000—5,000 men, and make the city a bulwark of France. Montesquiou represented that he was not strong enough to undertake a war against Switzerland; that all the advantages hitherto gained would be hazarded directly they forced the Swiss to give up their neutrality;—that no real breach of treaty had taken place, and that it was rather the machinations of Clavière which had induced Geneva to apply for help;—that the Swiss troops would withdraw as soon as security was given for the independence of the city; and that then France might safely reckon on the Genevese Democrats. Lebrun sent him word on of 8th of October, that

he might either besiege or negotiate as he thought best, but that in the latter case, the negotiation must end in the admission of a French garrison, and the whole affair be so managed as not to put a stop to the French successes. Hereupon Montesquiou opened a conference with the Swiss plenipotentiaries, and declared at the very beginning, and in contradiction to the instructions he had received, that France had no other desire than the removal of the 600 Bernese soldiers. Geneva replied that it wished above all things to be at peace with France, and would gladly content itself with a force of 600 men for two months, for the preservation of internal quiet. Montesquiou warmly recommended the acceptance of these terms, and being supported in the Council of Ministers by Roland, he received full powers to settle all differences with the Swiss Diet. Accordingly he signed a compact on the 23d October, to the effect that the 600 Swiss were to remain till the 1st of Dec.; that the French batteries should retire to a distance of 12 leagues from Geneva immediately, and the other troops on Dec. the 1st;—and that all former treaties were to remain in force. It was at once resolved in Paris not to agree to such a settlement of the affair. The compact was not ratified, and a second and somewhat severer modification of it, which Montesquiou sent in on Nov. the 2nd, was rejected with equal vehemence, and on the 9th it was proposed to impeach the General as a traitor to his country. "When I called upon him" cried Dubois-Crancé, "to throw some shells into the town, he answered, 'Don't you hear the wailing of the Parisian capitalists?'" Rovère, who brought up the report, said: "Entrusted as he was with two highly important missions, to spread the wholesome principles of the Rights of Man, and as ambassador of the Republic to negotiate with Geneva, he had nevertheless entered into an understanding with the Genevese Aristocrats, and signed the disgraceful article with respect to the retreat of the

French." Hereupon the decree of impeachment was carried without opposition.

Montesquiou narrowly escaped apprehension by rapid flight from his camp to Geneva itself. Owing to the weakness of the French corps, hostilities were not immediately commenced, but no agreement was come to with Geneva. The sword remained suspended over the head of the little city, and we shall see how quickly, and with what terrible force, it fell.

It was thus that the warlike propaganda began its course, and simultaneously with it, that systematic draining of the neighbouring countries in the South, which was carried on under the pretence of liberating them. Of still greater importance, as regards the general war, was the fact that at the same time this propaganda violated the territory of the German Empire.

It has already been mentioned that the French possessed in Alsace, besides garrisons to the number of 25,000 men, a disposable field force of 22,000 more (under the name of the Army of the Rhine), of which Biron was first and Custine second in command. Of these Kellerman had received 4,000 for his march into the Argonnes, and Dumouriez had subsequently asked for 15,000 more, for a flank movement against Verdun and the Prussian line of retreat. When however this demand reached Paris and Strasbourg, these forces had been already otherwise disposed of; for the German valley of the Rhine afforded a most alluring prospect. The greater part of the country was occupied by impotent Ecclesiastical Rulers. The officials were mostly alien priests, who were bound to the soil neither by the past nor the future, and who regarded their offices simply as a source of personal maintenance. All the springs of political life were relaxed; the finances and the troops neglected; manufactures and education in a very moderate state of advancement, and the great mass of the population solely intent on the preservation of their personal inheritance

These evils were further increased by discord between the Bishops and their Chapters, and between the Ecclesiastical Government and the Provincial Diets. The modern ideas of freedom were rife in the middle classes of the citizens, while the mass of the people were without a trace of national feeling. The means of military defence were miserably deficient, since the majority of the Rhenish Princes thought only of peace and quiet, and one or two of them even looked for friendship and support to France. At the time of which we speak there were 10,000 Austrians in the Breisgau, under the command of Count Esterhazy,—2,000 soldiers of Mayence with 1,200 Austrians in Spires,—and about as many troops of the Empire in Mayence. Count Erbach's corps of 7,000 men had been moved to the Upper Moselle since Sep. the 11th. If the French, who were already assembled in Strasbourg and Landau, succeeded in getting a few days start (as they most likely would) of Esterhazy, who had so much farther to march, there was absolutely no obstacle to a victorious progress, and a conquest of the most attractive kind.

General Custine was the first to direct his attention to securing these advantages. This man, formerly a marquis of the *ancien régime*, employed in diplomatic missions and frequently honoured by the confidence of the Emperor Joseph and the favour of the Prussian Government, had taken part in the Revolution with all the pride and self-confidence of an experienced politician and a gallant soldier. Like most of his contemporaries he had no presentiment of the incalculable vastness of the interests at stake, and no consciousness of the duties, the non-performance of which must bring about universal ruin to his country. He saw nothing but the glorious fruits of enlightenment, extension of power for France, and the promotion of his own personal interests. In his fiery zeal, he had advanced too far to recede and was even obliged to atone for his title of ancient nobility by shewing himself the most radical of all the generals in the Army of the Rhine. In restless ambition he

was quite on a par with Dumouriez, and he exceeded that General as much in youthful indiscretion as he fell short of him in military efficiency.

Custine had already proposed an expedition against Spires in August, and had received a reprimand for his inconsiderate rashness from his superior Biron. What would be the sense, he was asked, of sending off 15,000 men to a distance, while 100,000 Germans were preparing for an overpowering attack on Paris? But Custine did not rest there. He had several channels of communication with the ruling party of the Gironde, and especially his friend Guyton-Morveau, who ranked among the more important members of this party in the Convention. He continued, therefore, to press his views and to make his preparations; and on the 9th of Sept., Biron himself informed the Minister at War that Custine wished to engage in an enterprise, and that he had left him at liberty to act as he pleased, and only recommended caution. Eight days afterwards Custine himself proposed to the Minister the expedition against Spires, saying that the magazines of the enemy ought to be destroyed, and the officials and clergy laid under contribution, but that the people should be spared in order to gain their affections. We see that he knew what the Parisians liked to hear. Servan felt the weight of Dumouriez's objections, and even Custine at one time favoured the idea of leading 18,000 men to Metz, but recurred at last to his former plan of attacking the ecclesiastical Rhine country—the Priests' Road, as it was called. At last the Minister assented, and Custine began his march on the 28th with 18,000 men. On the 13th he attacked Spires, dispersed the garrison, and seized the magazines in the city. General Neuwinger then advanced to Worms, and entered it without the slightest opposition. Contributions were immediately laid on Worms to the amount of 1,200,000, and on Spires of 600,000 francs—*i. e.* on the Magistracy, Bishop and Clergy, for the citizens were exempted; Custine's first

manifesto having proclaimed "war to the palaces of tyrants,[1] but peace to the cottages of the just." The impression made by the successes of the French in Western Germany was immense, and gave overpowering testimony to the rottenness of the existing state of things. Universal consternation prevailed in the neighbouring city of Mayence, which, in consequence of the disaster at Spires, had lost its troops. There remained only 1,300 soldiers of the Empire (from Nassau and Fulda) and 800 Austrians—a force not half sufficient to hold the town, the fortifications of which, moreover, were in a miserably dilapidated state. The Elector came in haste from Aschaffenburg on the 8th of Oct., but in his good-humoured weakness he was easily persuaded by Stein, the Prussian *Chargé d'affaires,* that he ought not to expose his person to danger,[2] and returned to Würzburg the same evening. The Council of regency which he left to supply his place sent off urgent petitions for help to the Landgrave of Darmstadt, whose troops, 4,000 strong, would have secured the defence of Mayence. This Prince had made himself conspicuous, the very year before, as a bitter enemy of the French, and had implored the Diet to assist him in recovering his territorial and seigniorial rights in Alsace, that, as he expressed himself, "a Prince of the Catti, who had been revered for centuries, might not become entirely powerless in his own land." But all these fine sentiments had disappeared without a trace. He replied to the People of Mayence, that the French had treated his estates in Alsace so well, that he did not wish to quarrel with them. All his forces therefore were ordered to cross the Rhine and retire to Darmstadt; preparations were made for a further retreat upon Giessen, and the officials throughout the country were

[1] *Guerre aux Palais; Paix aux Chaumières.* — [2] His despatches to head-quarters, Oct. 6th. Stein had good reason to offer this advice in the interests of the defence, to all the particulars of which he himself attended. The suspicion that he was an accomplice in betraying the city is quite unfounded.

directed to avoid offending the French and to give them good quarters *sub reservatione reservandarum.*[1] Under these circumstances Mayence resorted to the desperate expedient of arming the people. The Students showed the greatest zeal and readiness, and the peasants of the Rheingau poured into the town, of whom 1,500 were armed in two days. On the other hand the city had bitter experience of its military defenders. On occasion of a false alarm the brave troops of the Empire, above-mentioned, disappeared and were nowhere to be found. There was no quarter from which aid could be expected. The Bavarian Palatinate set up great boards on its frontiers with the inscription "Neutral Palatine Territory;" nay, the Authorities gave passes to French spies under the names of Palatine officers.[2] In Trèves nothing was thought of but flight and safety. First the Minister, and then the Elector, hastened down the Moselle to Coblentz, and a number of the wealthier inhabitants followed their example. No empty vessel was allowed to leave the city, that the means of travelling might be always at hand. The citizens beheld this shameful flight with indignation, and at last broke out into tumultuous attempts to stop it; but it was all to no purpose. There was but one company of Chasseurs in Coblentz. On the 12th of October, indeed, a reinforcement of 1,200 men arrived from Treves, and the inhabitants of the Thal Ehrenbreitstein declared themselves willing to take up arms in defence of the fortress. But the Government and the Council of war issued a formal decree to the effect, that when the enemy advanced, a deputation should be sent to offer a contribution—to deliver up the Prussian Magazines in Coblentz,—and, if it was desired, to give them possession of Ehrenbreitstein itself. Amidst all these pitiful acts of cowardice, the fact would be almost comic, were it not so humiliating, that Custine

[1] Biron was able to send this circular forthwith to Paris. — [2] Stein's despatches.

had no sooner dismounted from his horse at Spires, than he received a letter from the Magistrates of Wetzlar, in which they assured him that their town was in the highest degree neutral, and had no other wish than a *sauve garde*.[1]

All this happened even before Mayence was taken. A weak flying corps of the enemy, led by a verbose and very indifferent General, was sufficient by its mere appearance to throw every head from Kehl to Cologne into confusion. Custine had at first no idea of this, and determined to make no further advance for fear of coming into collision with the Austrians. But Esterhazy did not venture beyond Rastatt, and on the 6th of October Custine received intelligence of the state of things in Mayence. He immediately proposed to Biron that he (Biron) should cross the Rhine at Kehl with all his forces—that he himself should do the same at Philippsburg,—and that with these united troops they should march against the Austrians and the hereditary dominions of the Emperor. As Biron however refused to leave Alsace, on account of the position of the Prussians in Lorraine, Custine determined on a *coup de main* against Mayence; and during the night of the 16th he began a forced march against the fortress. He relied on the badness of the garrison, the fears of the Authorities, and, lastly, on his own secret understanding with some of the citizens. In his despatches we find no mention of Major Eikemeier, who has been often suspected, but we do find the names of the patriots George Wedekind and Böhmer, and of an officer of Mayence named Stamm. The sight of Custine's columns was sufficient to strike terror into their feeble hearts. The Commandant, Gymnich, proposed instant capitulation. The 800 Austrians left the city, and in their perversity directed their march, not to Coblenz, but through the Westerwald to Cologne. All the Public Officials took flight, and the French made their entrance on the 20th of October.

[1] Custine to the Minister at War, Oct. 5.

The news of this fresh loss fell like a thunderbolt on the German Empire. The immediate expectation was that Custine would forthwith occupy Coblenz and cut off the retreat of the Prussian army. There was in fact much discussion on the advisability of such a step amongst the French generals, and subsequently Custine was severely reproached for neglecting this opportunity. But it was impossible he should really be aware of the inextricable confusion prevailing amongst his foes. And at the very utmost he could only have pushed forward 8,000 men to Coblentz, thereby exposing them to the greatest peril in case of the arrival of the Prussians, unless the gates of Ehrenbreitstein should be immediately thrown open to them by its panic-stricken garrison. The "cutting off" the retreat of the Prussians by such a handful of men is, after all, a mere phrase. It would indeed have been unfortunate enough for the German frontiers if Coblentz had fallen into the hands of the enemy, but in that case the Prussian army could have marched unmolested from Treves to Bonn and Cologne as well as to Coblentz. Custine, however, was decided by the state of diplomatic relations at this time, to which I shall soon refer. His object as well as Dumouriez's was to separate the Prussians from Austria, in pursuance of which he directed his attack in the first place against the undefended German Empire, from whose Diet Austria was just now zealously endeavouring to procure a declaration of war against France. He therefore sent General Neuwinger to occupy Frankfort, and to lay another contribution on the rich inhabitants; whereupon the poorer classes—to the great disgust of the revolutionary General—declared that they had no fault to find with their richer fellow-citizens. From Frankfort one detachment was sent northwards to Friedberg, and another southwards to the Neckar.

Custine issued a proclamation to the Hessian troops, calling on them to desert their Landgrave—the monster who did not seem aware that the judgment day had come for

all unrighteous Princes. The effect of this manifesto was the very contrary to that which he had intended. A deep and universal indignation was felt throughout Hesse, in the army as well as among the people at large. Every one took up arms, and a national war could have been kindled in a moment, had not the Landgrave himself, in his perpetual dread of commotion, done all in his power to check the popular feeling. But this was the only district where the will and the power to resist were manifested. The people of Mayence indeed shewed both apathy and disinclination, when ordered by Custine to constitute themselves a free people; but on the other hand, the Syndic of the provincial diet, Lassaulx, arrived from Coblentz on the 26th, and in the name of the inhibitants invited the General to come to their city, and to deal mercifully with it. The Princess of Wied recommended herself to his clemency; the Authorities in Bonn and Cologne began to pack up their goods, and the Landgrave's family fled from Cassel. Nor was the appearance of things in Upper Germany at all more encouraging. Würzburg and Bamberg were expecting the attack of the French with fear and trembling; Würtemberg and Baden protested their neutrality; nay even the Ambassadors of the Imperial Diet at Ratisbon hired vessels to float down the Danube as soon as the French should arrive at Nüremberg. What are we to say to so humiliating a spectacle?—to such a self-abandonment on the part of all the Sovereigns, in a region of at least 8 million brave and industrious people, reduced by the badness of their political constitution to such trembling fear of 18,000 Frenchmen? One remembrance may suffice for an answer to this question; these were the Ecclesiastical Territories, whose fall our Ultramontanist party deplores; they were, moreover, the States of the Rhine Confederation, who in after times have so often described their sovereignty as the very essence of German freedom!

The confidence of the enemy kept pace, of course, with the apprehensions of these potentates. "France," wrote Custine

to the Minister on the 24th, "must not treat with the despots; it owes deliverance to every people; the time is come to make despots bow their heads; the neutral Princes will rejoice at every little attention which our Generals may choose to pay them." "My Hessian proclamation," he announced on the 28th, "was only the commencement of my grand scheme for the overthrow of all tyrants. The German Empire is already preparing to receive my benefits; but it is necessary above all things to lull Prussia to sleep by the offer of a French Alliance." Lebrun replied on the 30th, "You shall have every possible support; sweep away the enemy from both banks of the Rhine; treat the towns and the people with brotherly kindness, for they are already well inclined to us."

Such was the state of things in the second half of October. In all directions the French Government manifested its desire to rouse the people to freedom, to overthrow the reigning Princes and conquer their lands. With regard to Prussia, the same notion still existed of inducing her to sign a separate treaty of peace,—thereby securing her non-intervention,—and then dealing with divided Germany at pleasure. If we now transport ourselves to head-quarters at St. Menehould, and examine events which took place four weeks earlier, we shall be better able to follow the course of the negotiations directed to this grand object.

Dumouriez, though sufficiently sensible of the advantages of a separate peace with Prussia, had formed too correct a judgment of the internal condition of France, to allow of his lending himself unconditionally to the inconsiderate fanaticism of the Gironde, or to Danton's brutal lust of plunder. He was still full of enthusiasm for the conquest of Belgium, but even this he would have willingly sacrificed to the internal restoration of France. On the 29th of September, immediately after receiving the Duke of Brunswick's last manifesto,—in consequence of which he broke off the truce—he wrote to Lebrun as follows: "Although the people here,

have an earnest desire for peace, and are only prevented by a sense of decorum from obtaining it, yet I am fully convinced that the King will never desert the Austrians. But even on this supposition," he added, "I am of opinion, that a general peace, which we might obtain on glorious conditions, would be better for us than the dangers of a long war; for neither money nor territory will be demanded of us, and we shall not be so mean-spirited as to agree to anything dishonourable to ourselves." The reports of his colleague Kellermann were of a similar character. "Prussia," he said, "will have nothing farther to do with the Emigrés, but will only treat with Louis according to the forms prescribed by the constitution. I think this an acceptable proposition, and we ought simply to send the King back to the Tuileries."

What a strange contrast is presented to us between Paris and the army! On the one side, the Demagogues, who had kindled the war to overthrow Louis, and now wished to continue it to revolutionise Europe; on the other, the Generals, who had encountered the danger, and now saw the laurels of conquest inviting them in every direction, raising their voices for peace, with a moderation which does them honour, in order to secure to their country tranquillity and freedom.

Dumouriez, moreover, was perfectly right, in the main, in his judgment respecting Prussia. The King, and all his Ministers and Generals, were earnestly desirous of peace, but none of them were willing to be the first to desert the common cause. Several reasons, any one of which would have been sufficient, cooperated to produce this sentiment. The King would not sheathe the sword without having at least procured the personal freedom of Louis XVI. He did not wish to break faith with Austria, except in the extreme case of that Power manifesting any positive hostility towards Prussia. And, lastly, he did not see any possibility, by means of a separate peace, of fulfilling his wishes with respect to

Poland. Their realization depended mainly on Russia, to which only a few weeks before he had bound himself by a new treaty to take part in the war against France—an engagement, the full importance of which we shall learn in connection with subsequent events. All these considerations, as we said before, rendered the conclusion of a separate peace impossible. But so deeply did they feel at the Prussian head-quarters the evils of the policy pursued—the loss of men, money and reputation which had already been suffered—and with such anxiety did they look forward to the dangers of a prolonged contest, that they would perhaps have renounced their claims on Poland, could they thereby have purchased an immediate and general peace.

Every other question, however, gave way before the urgency of the task of conducting the army—greatly weakened as it was—safely through the muddy defiles of the Argonnes. Though firmly resolved not to conclude a separate peace, the Prussian Government received the envoys, Benoit and Westermann, who arrived on the 29th of September, in the most friendly manner; opened negotiations with them, and without further delay began their retreat on the 30th. The French were so fully convinced of their own superiority, and so buoyed up by their future hopes, that there was little difficulty in lulling them into the happiest state of security. The Prussians took care to say nothing which could bind them; it was sufficient to express at every opportunity the disinclination which they really felt against the continuance of the war. Westermann, as it seems, had other *weighty* reasons for being easily satisfied—reasons to which he was remarkably open—and he had more than one embezzlement on his conscience. On this occasion, he is said to have pocketed 25,000 francs for his obliging manner of negotiating.[1] At all events he was full of triumph and enthusiasm; "What would you have?" he wrote to a friend in

[1] Morris to Washington, Jan. 7th, 1793.

Strasbourg? "I am omnipotent; I dined with the King yesterday; Prussia is about to separate from Austria. The whole universe cannot now do France any harm." The conduct of individual Prussian officers, especially of Count Kalkreuth, did the rest; for they purposely and openly expressed their dislike of the Austrians and the Emigrés. The honest General Duval informed his friend Merlin, that all the Generals were united in the wish for separation from Austria, and alliance with the French Republic. Nor was his statement false, the error consisted in drawing a conclusion from these expressions as to the sentiments of the King. Amid conversation of this sort, the Prussian army quietly continued its march through the Argonnes. Dumouriez himself again conceived hopes of a separate peace, and checked the pursuit. Kellermann, who had at first been eager to attack the retreating Prussians, was prevented from doing so, and was let into the secret, which delighted him almost as much as it had done Westermann. He announced to Servan on the 3rd: "The Prussians do not seem disinclined to desert the Emigrés; we might gain them over at little cost and completely crush the Emperor." He then threw a glance over other parts of Europe. "We should hand over conquered Austria to the Prussians, who might strip her of the rest of Silesia, and take possession of Dantzic and Thorn; by which means she would get into difficulties with the Russians, and we should send a fleet to their aid into the Baltic." These thoughts were just as rife and prolific in the heads of the political chiefs in Paris, as in that of the General himself; and all that was necessary on the part of the Prussians to reap the advantages accruing from them, was to give them no direct contradiction. The Commissioners of the Convention who were with the army sent Westermann back to Paris with the most promising despatches, and zealously endeavoured to bring matters to a conclusion. But when the Prussians had passed through the defiles and there was no longer any fear of danger to their retreat, their duty

towards Austria as confederates was immediately brought forward again; and their final words at every negotiation were a truce which should include the Austrian armies. The Commissioners and Kellermann saw nothing in this but a natural hesitation in taking so important a step as an open breach of treaty, and an entire change of system; but Dumouriez, with his acuter judgment, returned to his original conviction, and saw that the late negotiation had injured the French no less deeply than the former one had done the Prussians. The enemy, whose divisions were now reunited, had still about 60,000 men at their disposal; they were greatly afflicted by sickness, but the French too had suffered equal fatigues, and for the most part with younger and weaker men. On the 5th of October, therefore, Dumouriez announced to Pache, the new Minister at War, that he was not in a condition to carry out his former plan, or to drive the Prussians entirely from the French territory; that he should therefore send Kellermann to try a *coup de main* against Verdun. He likewise expressed his intention of strengthening Champagne for the spring by new armaments, and of immediately employing half his army in relieving Lille, which had been beleaguered during the last few weeks by 12,000 Austrians. He had resumed his designs on Belgium, and felt the most ardent longing to withdraw thither from the present thankless theatre of war. He was certain that Prussia would not conclude a separate peace, or France a general one; his mind was now only occupied in finding means for future splendid conquests, and he ordered Beurnonville to lead 32,000 men of the French army to the frontiers of Flanders, while he himself hastened to Paris, on the 10th, to come to some understanding with the Ministry respecting Belgium. Kellermann was to continue the pursuit of the Prussians with about 40,000 men.

In fact Brunswick had now a decided intention of completing the conquest of the Meuse fortresses, according to his former wish. Clerfait was to take Sedan, Hohenlohe-

Kirchberg was to continue the siege of Thionville, while the Duke himself was to take post between the two at Verdun, and to aid the one or the other according to circumstances. In his excess of caution, he was not altogether certain of succeeding; but as Dumouriez had already given orders for the departure of 32,000 men, Kellermann in all human probability would be unable to cross the Duke's purpose with the remainder of the army. Brunswick would thus have secured a strong position in the interior of France, from which with fresh strength he might have commenced dangerous offensive operations in the spring. In this case the French might have had their intoxicating dreams of conquest cooled down, and have lent a more willing ear to the Prussian desire of a general peace. For it was clear that with opponents like Danton and Lebrun, it was necessary to assume a commanding position to divert them from their aggressive schemes. For this purpose the King made strong representations in the beginning of October to the Courts of Madrid and London; he was not inclined, he said, any longer to bear the whole brunt of the war alone; England and Spain had no less interest than himself in the object pursued—the restoration of monarchy in France.

But no sooner were these plans formed than they received a death-blow from a highly unexpected quarter. The Austrians, both in the army and in Belgium, regarded the conferences between the Prussians and French with deep mistrust. Clerfait, Hohenlohe-Kirchberg, and the Archduke Charles himself, viewed the matter in the same light as Westerman and Kellermann, and expected every moment to hear the announcement of a new alliance between Prussia and France. The French did all in their power to enhance the suspicion, by displaying their friendship for Prussia more openly than was consistent with their actual hopes. Kellermann, although not remarkable for cunning, played his part incomparably on this occasion. He told Count Kalkreuth, for example, that grievously as Austria had sinned against the

Republic, the wish of the King of Prussia was sufficient to induce him to include the Austrians in the truce with the Prussians. Still stronger were the expressions made use of to Count Lindenau, which emanated entirely from Kellermann's well-known plans: that the French government were aware that Prussia meditated a new partition of Poland; but that it would rather rejoice at the strengthening of a power which must sooner or later be its own ally. These and a hundred similar speeches were spread about, exaggerated and envenomed: it was of no avail that Prince Reuss, the diplomatic representative of Austria, was acquainted with all the particulars of the French negotiation; and he himself complained to Lucchesini that he feared he should not be able to efface the impression of these reports at Vienna. The Austrian Generals too were excessively anxious to get out of France, where they feared to become the victims of an unexampled treachery. They insisted upon always having Prussian troops between themselves and the enemy, and in this way caused frequent confusion in the route of the march. On the 8th of October Hohenlohe-Kirchberg, when on one occasion he was to form the extreme rear of the march, wrote in a sort of despair to the Duke, reminded him of his paternal duty towards the whole army, and finally proposed to effect an immediate truce on condition of a complete evacuation of the French soil.[1]

This was all mere folly, since the King was more firmly resolved than ever to adhere to the Austro-Prussian alliance.[2] His real wish for a general peace, on the other hand, ought to have been fully shared by the Austrians themselves, and the fact of his lending half an ear to the French proposals had been as advantageous to the retreat of the Austrians, as to that of the Prussians. But still it had a decided effect

[1] We bring forward these unimportant details because they are probably the starting point of a statement spread by the *Homme d'état* that such a truce was actually made. — [2] Reports of Lucchesini to the Ministry at Berlin, of the 9th, 17th and 19th Oct.

on the Government at Brussels, where they came to the resolution not to risk another drop of Austrian blood to aid the progress of the Prussian arms, but for the immediate future to operate independently. On the 8th of October, the same day on which Hohenlohe was pouring out his heart in complaints, as we have seen, Brunswick received notice that the Government at Brussels had recalled the corps of Generals Clerfait and Hohenlohe from the allied army. The latter was destined to take up a covering position in the territory of Luxembourg, and the former to aid in the siege of Lille, where the force already on the spot was not sufficient to effect such a complete blockade, as was expected, to ensure its surrender.[1] At the same time the first intelligence was received of Custine's successes, and the Landgrave of Hesse rushed headlong home, leaving express orders to his troops likewise to make good their retreat as speedily as possible. Brunswick was thus left with his 30,000 Prussians, and all hope of maintaining himself on French ground entirely vanished. Even to leave a garrison behind in Verdun would have been a useless sacrifice of the men who formed it; the fortress, therefore, capitulated on the 13th, and the retreat towards Longwy was continued. The difficulties and sacrifices of this retrogade movement increased at every step with the advance of the season, and the growing weariness of the troops. They had no means of transporting their guns and baggage-waggons but the forced labour of the peasants' horses; the muskets were for the most part rendered useless by the constant rain, and dysentery raged with increasing fury. Under these circumstances Kalkreuth's diplomacy again did good service. He announced to Brunswick, on the 14th of October, that the Commissioners of the Convention had consented to a truce including the Austrians; it is true that the conditions they laid down were quite impracticable, but the negotiations at

[1] Brunswick to Tauenzien, Oct. 8.

all events secured the safety of his rear-guard; and the French Generals themselves could not but laugh at his having outwitted them and brought the Austrians too safely off. The Duke, on his part, complained bitterly of these allies, who threw many obstacles in the way of the Prussian Commissariat in Luxembourg, "as if," wrote Lucchesini, "they had no more concern in the war than the Grand Turk." The state of feeling was not improved by a final conference which the King held with Hohenlohe-Kirchberg on the 16th, in which he endeavoured to persuade him at least to assist in holding Longwy during the winter. High words were exchanged, but without effect. Hohenlohe declared that with the instructions he had received, nothing in the world could keep him on the other side of the French frontier; whereupon, Longwy also capitulated on the 22nd of October, and immediately afterwards the German troops entirely evacuated the soil of France.

At the same time a turn in diplomatic affairs took place, of the highest conceivable importance to the fate of Europe and the Revolution.[1]

The course of the campaign had, as we may imagine, been followed with the greatest interest and suspense in Vienna. Francis II., although, as Archduke, he had been at the head of the war party, had uttered nothing, since the outbreak of hostilities, but complaints of the unhappy complication of affairs, and the loudest wishes for peace. There were indeed sufficient grounds for such sentiments. The nation and the Treasury had been exhausted by the still bleeding wounds of the Turkish war; the internal troubles of Joseph's reign were still felt in their consequences; the war with France was full of dangers, and afforded but little prospect of advantage; and the Minister Cobenzl, as well as

[1] All that follows here is derived from the despatches of Lucchesini to the Ministers at Berlin, and of Van Haeften, Dutch ambassador in Vienna, to the States-General of Holland.

the greater part of aristocratic society in Vienna, were loud in their expression of the sentiments to which Leopold had once given currency on the French question. But beneath this abhorrence of war, the young Emperor concealed thoughts of a very different kind. I shall have to speak hereafter of the many occasions on which, since his accession, the persons and aims of the reign of Joseph again made their appearance. Francis II., too, liked to regard himself as the darling and successor of his great uncle, and was impatient to follow his example, and to break through the narrow limits of the two last years. He had never sympathised with the views of his father; his mind was not wide enough to enable him to comprehend the far-reaching projects of Leopold; his temper, although seldom manifested, was too selfwilled to allow him, after the manner of his father, to wait, to calculate, to yield for the moment, and to return again to the charge. Thus, in the beginning of his reign, when still under his Father's influence, he had brought forward the Polish-Saxon scheme; but no sooner had he become familiar with business, than he unhesitatingly became the first and most eager advocate of the exactly opposite project of a Polish partition, to which he was especially attracted by the hope of territorial aggrandizement. It is true, as we have seen, that the most serious difficulties arose in the actual execution of this plan. The chief supporter of the Bavarian exchange was Baron Spielmann, a Statesman of Joseph's school, who had possessed little influence in Leopold's reign. He was exactly fitted by nature to play the part of a subaltern official, and his technical knowledge rendered him almost indispensable in the State Chancery; but to the conduct of great affairs he brought few other advantages than an often very short-sighted zeal. To the Emperor, who was not very fond of explanations or discussions, such an instrument was extremely convenient; and Count Cobenzl, who, from the great age of Prince Kaunitz, was regarded as the real head of the

Foreign office, began already to suspect a disagreeable rival in Spielmann. The latter was continually explaining how Prussia's opposition to the cession of the Franconian principalities might be broken; and he firmly adhered to this conviction—to the great delight of the Emperor—in spite of all the doubts of his colleagues. The unexpected and unanimous resistance which France offered to the attack of the Powers gave birth to other plans. Hitherto all idea of conquering French provinces had been rejected, from the wish not to embitter all parties in France, and not to rob King Louis, for whose deliverance war was being made. But now the restoration of the Bourbon throne seemed doubtful; and in spite of their own disinterestedness, the German Courts saw the whole of France under arms against the foreigners. In Vienna the notion gained ground in some quarters, that it would be simpler to look for the desired compensation in France, rather than in the complicated Bavarian exchange affair. For the moment, however, Spielmann kept to his opinion, and carried his point in the Ministerial Council on the 5th of September. It was resolved on this occasion to begin two negotiations, one of which was to assume a peaceful tone. As an abatement of revolutionary insolence was expected on the approach of the Germans to Paris, Count Mercy, formerly ambassador in France, and Baron Thugut, the negotiator of the Peace of Teschen, were to repair to Luxembourg, to be present as experienced Counsellors at any negotiations which might be carried on in concert with Prussia. Even Baron Breteuil, the representative of Louis XVI., was summoned to this Conference, to act as a counterpoise to the violence of the Emigrés. But all these proceedings were a mere empty show; the real designs of the Emperor were shown only in the second, simultaneous, negotiation. Spielmann, together with Baron Collenbach, Actuary of the Cabinet, was sent directly to the Prussian head-quarters, to extort from the King the cession of Anspach and Baireuth, in return for the acquisition of a Polish

province; and above all things to dispose Prussia to a zealous continuation of the war. Cobenzl, though not very enthusiastic about these objects, consented to this mission in order to get rid of the disagreeable presence of Spielmann about the person of the Emperor; and the latter started from Vienna to the theatre of war on the 12th of September.

It was long before he reached the end of his journey. The nearer he approached the French frontier, the more slowly he travelled; in Belgium he found the minds of men agitated and terrified by the failure of the campaign, and the alleged treachery of the Prussians. At last, in the middle of October, he arrived at Longwy, in great fear of falling into the hands of the French. At head-quarters he found himself in the presence of an old acquaintance, Count Haugwitz, who had been ambassador at Vienna during the summer, had passed with Spielmann into France, and been named Cabinet Minister immediately after his arrival. Spielmann was justified in looking upon this as a good omen, since Schulenburg had returned to Berlin in disgrace, and the only diplomatist remaining at head-quarters was Lucchesini, who had always been disliked at Vienna on account of his stinging sarcasms, and who, as a disciple of the Frederician school, was a violent opponent of the Austrian alliance. Haugwitz, on the contrary, had been on an intimate footing with Bischoffswerder since the times of the *Rosicrucian* intrigue, and passed in Vienna for an amiable companion, as well as a convenient politician. Spielmann, therefore, was able to express himself all the more frankly and unreservedly. He pointed out that Austria had really not the slightest interest in continuing the war, and that the Emperor might very well acknowledge the Republic, since the power of France must necessarily sink under such a form of government. If, under such circumstances, Austria consented to continue the war, she must have some practical advantages set clearly before her; Prussia must agree to Austria's receiving Bavaria together with Anspach and Baireuth. It

would he better, he continued, entirely to alter the character of the war, without further reference to the restoration of monarchy in France; to procure territorial compensation for the expenses of the war in France itself; and for this purpose to alter the late defensive alliance into one of offence.

These overtures completely withdrew the veil which had hitherto concealed the real character of the war carried on by the German Powers. It never was, what it has been so incessantly called, an aggressive war, or a war of principles. It was begun unwillingly to ward off the attacks of the Revolutionists. It had, indeed, in the beginning, called forth in Vienna and Berlin some avaricious schemes, nominally of compensation, but in reality of conquest. But hitherto the intrusion of these selfish views—at any rate in the principal point, the treatment of French affairs—had been carefully avoided. The German Governments, in their dealings with the National Convention, only spoke of the restoration of quiet, order and peace. But now, all lingering scruples were to be abandoned. What Spielmann proposed was, in fact, to desert Louis XVI., to render all connection with the moderate party impossible, and to give a fresh and tremendous impulse to the Revolution by inflaming the national pride of the French.

Under these circumstances, there could be no thought, in any quarter, of a general peace. The King of Prussia had to contemplate the disastrous conclusion of the late campaign, innumerable military complications during the coming year, and the most troublesome demands on the part of his ally. Goltz reported from St. Petersburg, that Austria was pushing her claims to Baireuth and Anspach at the Russian Court, and that Russia had undoubtedly resolved on the partition of Poland. The Russian Ambassador at Berlin, Alopeus, who by order of his Government had repaired to head-quarters, overflowed with expressions of devotion and friendship. After mature consideration of the circumstances, the King and all his counsellors agreed that they must no longer

hesitate, and that the time was come for energetic action. The King first of all despatched an autograph letter to the Empress Catharine, on the 17th of October, informing her, that he had been forced by the inclemency of the weather to retreat, but that he would not forsake the great cause; but that before he could finally resolve on continuing the war, he owed it to himself and his people to determine in his own mind what compensation was due to him; that the Empress having desired to know what he claimed, he had directed his Ministers to give every information on the subject. These demands, however, had in the mean time been considerably modified by Haugwitz. The latter pointed out that the claim of the King had been confined to compensation for the campaign just closed; but that, as there was now no longer any doubt of the continuance of the war, and a second campaign, the claim to compensation must be increased in proportion to the increase of his exertions. The King in the ardour of his Polish wishes, immediately gave his consent to these propositions.

Before the decisive negotiation with Spielmann—who had been hindered by sickness for some days—the Duke of Brunswick had another conference with General Valence on the 21st of October, at the capitulation of Longwy. The latter, to the great surprise of the Duke, declared that his Government would consent to a general peace, if Austria would erect her Belgian provinces into an independent State, or hand them over to a less powerful ruler. In this case the Convention would liberate Louis XVI., and grant an amnesty to the Emigrés. Such a proposal seemed to fit in very well with the Bavarian exchange; and Haugwitz therefore hastened to communicate it to Spielmann, who immediately prevailed on Prince Reuss and Lucchesini to attend a further conference with the hostile commander Kellermann, on the 26th of October, at the castle of Aubange. Valence, who was also present, repeated his proposals, and without further circumlocution named the Elector of Bavaria as a

Prince whom France would willingly accept as future ruler of Belgium. It soon became evident that the Generals were unprovided with full powers by their Governments, and would not conclude even an armistice, except on utterly inadmissible conditions. Lucchesini therefore hastened to break off the hopeless discussion. The King, who had anticipated this result, had at the very same time summoned the other Austrian Statesmen—Spielmann, Mercy and Thugut—who were still at head-quarters. He received them in the village of Merle, close by the gates of Luxembourg, and communicated to them his irrevocable will respecting the future campaign. He repeated what he had written to the Empress Catharine—rejected once for all the cession of the Franconian Principalities—and demanded a larger compensation in Poland, in the case of his raising more than 20,000 men for the French war. He concluded by saying, that Haugwitz was empowered to lay before them his precise demands.

Hereupon a very lively discussion took place in Luxembourg between Spielmann and Haugwitz. The former represented that the principle of perfect equality in respect to the acquisitions of the two Powers had always been laid down; how then, he asked, could Prussia bring forward a plan, according to which she demanded a Polish province for herself, while Austria would not obtain a single square mile of land, but only a better rounding of her territory? Haugwitz replied, that the principle of equality could only hold good in the case of a war undertaken by two Powers by mutual desire and consent; but that in this case Austria was alone attacked, and Prussia afforded help of her own free will, to an extent far beyond her obligation as a member of the alliance. Prussia, therefore, he said, was justified in demanding an indemnification corresponding to her exertions, and in leaving Austria to seek compensation from the aggressor—France. "This," cried Spielmann, "is something quite new; this is the grave of all alliances." "I am con-

vinced," answered Haugwitz, "that the Emperor will acknowledge the evident fairness of these principles." He then spread out a map of Poland, on which the King had drawn with his own hand the boundary line of his future province, which was nearly double in extent of that which had been claimed in Mayence. "When," he said, "we have taken possession of this district, we will continue to cooperate against France with all our powers; but if obstacles are thrown in our way, we will only furnish the 20,000 men, as we are bound to do by the treaty of February; in which case we shall indemnify ourselves with a smaller province of Poland." He then handed to the Imperial Minister a note dictated by the King at Merle, on the 25th, in which these demands were formally stated. It was in vain that Spielmann summoned Prince Reuss to his aid. They disputed for three hours, but Haugwitz adhered to his original proposition, and called upon them to send the note to Vienna. "I must do it," said Spielmann at last, "I am a ruined man!"

Under these circumstances the French negotiation naturally fell to the ground of itself. Dohm, the Prussian Ambassador at Cologne, indeed, sent word to Luxembourg, that an agent of the French Ministry, named Mandrillon, had also made proposals of peace and alliance to him; but Lucchesini, on the 29th of October, immediately drew up a decisive answer, of which the following were the main points. "Since France refuses to treat until her territory is evacuated, Prussia must insist, on her part, that Custine should first of all withdraw from the territory of the German Empire. As the King continues to feel the deepest interest in the fate of Louis XVI., he requires from the French Ministers a previous statement respecting the means which they possess of liberating the French Monarch. Lastly, the King cannot enter into any farther negotiations without the consent of Austria." We shall see that the French Government were not deterred by this communication, although their views were already so extended, that it was impossible for Prussia to remain neu-

tral, and no alternative was left her but war or alliance with France. Dumouriez clearly saw this, and felt certain of the continuance of war. As early as the 28th of October he forbade General Valence to indulge in further diplomacy. It was only lost time, he said, except for the rogues who wished to lure on France by pretended negotiations; the Republic could not treat with Brunswick, the author of the insulting manifestoes, and did not choose to bandy words with despots about the freedom of the Belgian people. He therefore urged the General to enter Belgium with his *corps d'armée* as speedily as possible, and wrote to Kellermann to pass by Luxembourg, and throw himself on Treves and Coblentz, "to *municipalize* the Priests' high road." "It is absolutely necessary," he said, "to have 150,000 men beyond the borders during this winter; partly to procure money and circulate *assignats*, and partly to avoid exhausting the resources of our own country in feeding our armies. I hope in the spring to shake hands with you across Cologne. The Rhine must be the limit of our campaign from Geneva to Holland—perhaps to the sea. When we have accomplished this task then, come what may, the European Revolution will have made mighty progress." The Ministry came to the same resolution; all the armies, without exception, were to pass the winter on the Rhine.

And thus the Revolution, having wasted the resources of France, prepared to seek subsistence, booty and conquest, beyond her borders. The old Governments, on the other hand, no longer aimed at the overthrow of anarchy, but were pleased with the turmoil by which they hoped to profit. On the 29th of October, the Emperor wrote from Vienna to the King of Prussia: "Your Majesty may be assured of my firm resolution to exert myself to the utmost against the common enemy, and to procure for both of us every guarantee and compensation which we are entitled to demand, and able, with our united powers, to obtain." The impetuous zeal of Joseph II. spoke here by the mouth of his favourite

nephew, and the Powers which had taken up arms to check the spread of revolutionary flames, were now entering themselves on a similar course of violence. "Come what may,"—these words of the rash French General became likewise the watchword of Germany and France, and consequently, of European policy.

BOOK V.

COMMENCEMENT OF THE WAR BETWEEN ENGLAND AND FRANCE.

CHAPTER I.

A GENERAL REVIEW.

THE MIDDLE AGES AND MODERN TIMES CONTRASTED.—CHARACTERISTICS OF THE FRENCH REVOLUTION.—COINCIDENCE OF THE FRENCH REVOLUTION WITH THE AGRESSIVE POLICY OF RUSSIA.

WE have carried our history of the revolutionary period down to the time when the Communist democracy unfolded its victorious banner for the first time in France; and after a temporary check, prepared itself for the last decisive struggle. We have at the same time traced the effects of the Revolution on the Continental States of Central Europe. Germany has been forced into a defensive war; Belgium, Switzerland and Italy, are threatened with dangerous invasions. At the same time the example of the French lust of conquest begins to find imitators in Vienna and Berlin, and the first symptoms appeared of the approaching extension of the movement, beyond its previous sphere, to Eastern Europe and the Ocean. In every direction, therefore, the call to freedom, raised in 1789, appeared like the signal for despotism and military violence. The history of the world can scarcely shew a turn of affairs so tragical—so terrible a fall after such vigorous efforts, such a grand developement, and such enthusiastic hopes. It is a moment well suited to ask ourselves the question, whether those hopes bore within them the seeds of decay, whether that developement was, from the very first, necessarily unfruitful.

He who draws this conclusion from the failure of the Revolution, and utterly condemns the movement of 1789, must overlook an indestructible impulse of the human heart, and pronounce the history of Europe for the last three hundred years to be one great lie.

Ever since the close of the Middle Ages, the nations of Europe had been struggling to reach the same object—though not with the same political programme—which the French Assembly of 1789 hoped to obtain for France. That object was the removal of all unfounded and imaginary authority, the loosing of all arbitrary bonds, the overthrow of all unnatural barriers. The world called to mind the venerable words of Holy writ: "Thou shalt not make to thyself any graven image, nor the likeness of anything that is in Heaven above, nor in the earth beneath ..... thou shalt not bow down to them nor worship them." Hitherto they had practised idolatry in every department of life, for they had attributed to all the institutions of human society, a heavenly origin and a divine consecration. The visible Church in the Middle Ages included the State, Commerce and Education, in its own sphere, and thereby imparted to them its own character of holiness and immutability. All that existed therefore was unassailable, not because it was good but simply because it existed. All things moved on in a clearly defined, constant and unalterable course. The artisan adhered inviolably to the path laid down for him by his fathers; the merchant set out on certain fixed days to travel over and over again the same eternal route; and the mode of tilling the land was as unchangeable as the land itself. There was no employment which was not handed over to a close corporation, no possession which was not subjected to some irreversible privilege; so that the man who did not belong to one of the privileged classes had no means of raising himself to a position worthy of a human being. All progress was excluded from the world, every where form prevailed over substance, and all forms were stamped with the

same general pattern. During five hundred years of the Middle Ages, the world underwent, indeed, many territorial dislocations, but far less internal change than takes place in fifty years of modern times.

But just because all those privileges which ruled the world formed a single closely connected chain, the effect was all the more tremendous when the mind of man, in its eager aspirations after nature and truth, had broken a single link of its galling fetters. When Columbus changed men's views of the surface of the earth, and Copernicus, of the universe—when Luther had reformed the Church—the spirit of criticism was roused to the examination of every department of life, in all countries and among all peoples. Mankind acquired the power of rejection, and began to feel a delight in restlessness, and an eager desire of progress. They resolved never again to acknowledge an authority which was not founded on the nature of things; or a barrier, the necessity of which was not clearly proved; or a government, which did not recommend itself by genuine usefulness. The developement of the whole man, untrammelled by arbitrary bonds, and supported by the laws of his own moral nature—this was the great aim which now animated the nations with irresistible force. It was this thought which glowed in the bosoms of the champions of the Reformation, who, without regard to the authority or the power of the ancient Church, only asked their own hearts where the Spirit of God was to be found. It was this thought which in art and science struggled towards the light, deserting traditionary types and forms, and looking only for absolute truth and natural beauty. It is this thought which has brought about that revolution in the practical business of life, which since the last century has changed the conditions of men, and burst every commercial fetter, to the cry of unbounded freedom of labour. And lastly, it worked with no less energy in the field of politics than in society, education and religion. We see that every Order in turn endeavoured to open a future

career for itself by its own power. First it was the kings and princes of Europe, who in the name of the public good, the national weal, and the common rights of man, commenced the contest against the ancient institutions. The example of Louis XIV. was followed and improved upon by the monarchs of Prussia; and these again by the majority of the German princes. Bold and gifted rulers in Denmark and Sweden, Spain and Portugal, followed in the same track; and, lastly, even the Austrian State—the truest representative of the old system—was shaken to its very foundation by an imperial hand. There is not a spot in Europe where the spirit of innovation, the impulse towards sterling truth and genuine philanthropy, was not deeply felt.

This spirit—as it needs few words to prove—was creative and benevolent in its aspirations, but at the same time destructive and intractable in its whole nature and character. The ancient order of things had passed away, but the new laws were very far from being acknowledged or carried into execution. The very ground on which men had to build was still heaving beneath their feet, strewed in wild confusion with the ruins of the past, and the rude germs of the future; all the passions of the human heart were set in motion, and force alone appeared to rule the world. The century to which we owe a national provision for the instruction of the people, an active attention to the condition of the poorer classes, and general respect for the life of the individual man—this century, we say, was in its own mode of action both brutal and unmerciful. Whoever shall choose to denounce it as the very native soil of barbarity and selfishness, will be able to bring forward as many facts in support of his views, as he who expects to find in it the birth-place of a blissful futurity. For because this generation of men felt strong enough to refuse to worship idols, they too often worshipped nothing at all but their own strength. While they sought to rid themselves of all factitious authorities and arbitrary enactments, they forgot the

eternal laws to which human nature itself is subject. When therefore they had thrown off the bonds of external discipline, they had no guide but their own unbridled passions. And the more difficult and sublime the task which the century had to perform, the greater the number of sorrows and excesses into which it must inevitably fall. Nay more, it may be said that an historical idea, which unchecked and uncorrupted in its course should be immediately carried out by the great mass of a nation, could scarcely be one of sufficient depth and importance to become the foundation of a mighty future. The idea of modern freedom in its beneficent course has, indeed, been made to serve the passions of individuals; but as its intrinsic value can never excuse the abuses which have been carried on in its name, so, on the other hand, it would be foolish to deny its vital importance on account of those abuses.

If these remarks are applicable to the reforms undertaken by the monarchs of the 18th century, they will have still greater force in connection with the democratic Revolution of the French people.

This latter was not, as has so often been asserted, the commencement of a new era; it is rather an integral part of a process begun three centuries before. It aimed at the abolition of obsolete institutions, which, proceeding from the ages of feudalism, answered no good purpose in the actual state of France, and only oppressed the country with arbitrarily imposed burdens. It sought to win for mankind at large freedom of intercourse and labour,—recognition of their dignity as men, and of the principle of nationality—freedom of thought, and religious liberty. Notwithstanding the difference of time and place, we recognise the same deep impulses which had once brought Germany into conflict with the Romish Hierarchy, raised Holland against Spain, England against the Stuarts, and America against England. No less clear, however, is the fatal aberration of the French Revolution, at its first entrance into practice. While the

other countries we have mentioned made it their first and foremost care to rear a new order of things amidst the ruins of the old, the French Revolution declared war, not only against pretended authority, but against all moral laws whatever; and thereby unfitted itself to fulfil its infinitely important mission. For freedom of intercourse and trade, it substituted the plunder of proprietors; for universal equality before the law, it substituted the persecution of the higher classes; and for the emancipation of the conscience in religious matters, cruel ill-treatment of the princes of the Church. It knew no other means of improving a bad government than the annihilation of every governing power; it sought to restore equality by exterminating the rich and distinguished; and thought that true freedom consisted in striking off the chains from every passion and every crime. The aim of its policy seemed not to be rapid reconstruction of the ruined fabric of the law, but the unbridled licence of every will;—and thus for a space of two years there existed in France no influence and no law but that of brute violence. The sequel will shew us how this sole remaining power proceeded unchecked to the most terrible extremes, and how the greatest criminal proved on every occasion the most successful statesman. When once a state has entered upon such a path as this, it becomes irrecoverably involved in a fatal chain of consequences. Not that logical consistency of the reason, which may look down with proud contempt on those who loiter and halt between two opinions; but that moral concatenation by which—for the severer punishment of transgression—every evil deed draws after it still greater crimes.

It is true, no doubt, that in this case as in every other, a good cause is furthered by every occurrence, and that in this sense freedom was furthered by the French Revolution. A century would probably have passed over half Europe before the mouldering rubbish of feudalism could have been removed by peaceful means. But this momentary accelera-

tion of progress is too often counterbalanced by lasting evils. The Revolution has eaten away not only the political morality of nations, but their political enthusiasm. It has scared away the governments of Europe from reforms, as well as from acts of tyranny; it has forced the Church into a false political attitude, filled the middle classes with an immoral apathy, and the proletaries with unreasonable expectations. It clearly shewed, both in its first career (beginning with the year 1789), and wherever it has again reared its head, that it can have no other result than the first Empire—a military State, which grants indeed an equality of private rights, and an open career of service, but needs at the same time commercial prohibitions, the control of education, and ecclesiastical oppression; and which therefore brings with it the subjugation of labour, thought and faith, instead of freedom,—and crushes instead of fulfilling the claims of our national life.

Nor is it difficult to recognise the causes which gave that turn to French affairs, which has been so fatal to the whole succeeding century. We do not mean the errors of individuals or parties in particular emergencies, but the more general source from which, in France especially, a countless multitude of crimes and errors flowed, and irresistibly impelled the State towards the abyss of ruin. We need not look far for it, as we have said, and we shall see that it has not the least connexion with the principles of reform. It is only too terribly evident that this cause was the moral condition of France—and, indeed, of old, feudal, conservative France. We cannot wonder that the storm of freedom should level every existing institution with the ground, for they had all, for many ages past, been morally diseased and rotten to the very core. The example of the Court, from the reign of Francis I. to that of Louis XV., had poisoned the very life-blood of the higher classes. During the same period the middle classes were excluded more and more completely from all political rights, and consequently from

all political training; while the masses of the people were ground down by unceasing misery and hunger. It was a state of things which may without exaggeration be compared with that of the Byzantine Empire. There was the same moral stagnation among the ruling classes, and the same wretchedness among the despised rabble. There was, however, this difference; that while in Rome the utterly exhausted and despairing people entirely gave up the State as lost, and threw themselves unconditionally into the arms of a charitable Church, there was still sufficient national pride in the French people to make them feel their own degradation, and seek redemption within the limits of the State by a furious outbreak of despair. Under such circumstances every movement is necessarily cramped and distorted, however sublime and pure the spiritual impulse may be; and if no one undervalues Christianity because at its summons the degraded Romans turned their backs upon the labours and duties of the world, we ought not to condemn the idea of freedom, because her image inflamed the contemporaries of a Louis XV. to ferocity and crime. In a word, the French Revolution failed, not because the destruction of the old order of things was a mistake, but because the nation entered on the work of reform under a heavy load of inveterate immorality. It was not from amid the ruins, but beneath the shelter, of feudalism, that the avarice and selfishness, the violence and barbarism, grew up, which led the nation from the rejoicings of that night in August to the horrors of the September massacres.

Closely connected with this was another error,—which also existed long before 1789—respecting the nature of freedom itself;—an error, which not only marred the Revolution by the faults of the national character, but brought it into direct conflict with the very essence of that character. Men justly regarded the previous constitution of the State as the source of their sufferings, and were naturally led to set an exaggerated value on mere forms of government. They had

experienced the misery which had befallen the people under the Monarchy, and had arrived at the conclusion that the sovereignty of the people was the only antidote to that poison. In the bitterness of their hearts, rather than from a careful consideration of their wants, they accustomed themselves to consider freedom as synonymous with a democratic constitution. They were confirmed in this error, partly by general theories, and partly by the example of foreign nations; and in the consideration of these they entirely lost sight of the essential points—the interests, inclinations and capacities, of their own people. Whatever political shape the French nation may take in future times, thus much is certain, that hitherto it has never shown the slightest mark of a democratic people. If the essential characteristic of the Anglo-Saxon race is contained in the one word *Self-government*,—that of the French people may be defined as the constant tendency to *Centralization*. Every great and glorious era in its history is marked by the progress, not of individual developement, but of governmental power. All its virtues and weaknesses tend towards a form of Monarchy which to other nations might almost appear a *tyrannis;* and in fact all its efforts to establish popular rule have only aimed at a *tyrannis* of the majority, and not at the liberty of the whole people. At all times, and in every class of the French nation, we see the liveliest enthusiasm for the honour of the State as a whole, but very little concern for personal and corporative independence; and notwithstanding their splendid political talents, and lofty capacity of self-sacrifice, the French are wanting in the most important elements of sound democracy—the strength which bides its time, peaceful respect for law, and patient energy. It would be highly unjust to depreciate a great nation—which under its Kings has done so much to advance the highest aims of humanity—because it happens to have no taste for a Republic; but it is not the less evident on that account, that if the freedom of a people consists in its living according to the laws of

its own nature, then the effort to establish democracy in France is antagonistic to liberty itself. This was made apparent in 1789, and has been proved again in our own times. The declaration of the "Rights of man," which, couched in almost the very same words, created in North America a flourishing Republic, became on Celtic soil the starting point of a furious Ochlocracy.

For such in sober truth was the nature of the government, which, on the 10th of August 1792, marched over the smoking ruins of the ancient royal palace, and hastened with terrible energy to proclaim its character and its will to the nation at large. Only a few weak obstacles still kept it back from the conquest of the whole kingdom; and the contests by which it gained entire mastery in the land, and the measures by which it sought to rule it, will form the subject of our present consideration. Like their predecessors, who, not content with ruling France, had sought to extend their influence through neighbouring countries, they too aimed at the overthrow of all the existing systems of the world, and began their machinations for the simultaneous convulsion of East and West. This tendency too, like the communistic despotism to which they subjected their own nation, proceeded from the very nature of their government.

What revolution is in internal affairs, conquest is in foreign policy. They both begin by refusing to recognize established rights and vested interests. They may both be imposed as a necessity upon a nation by the duty of self-preservation, and when confined within the limits of necessity and duty, may be productive of the best effects. Of this nature was the English Revolution of 1688, and the Prussian conquest of Silesia and West Prussia, which for the moment violated the forms of law, but immediately afterwards proclaimed the maintenance of laws and treaties as their guiding principle. But no sooner does a State make the lust of conquest its principle of action, than it also be-

comes entirely revolutionary. He who refuses to be bound by any engagements abroad, will respect no rights at home. And the converse of this is also true; he who acknowledges no law but the right of insurrection and brute violence, will always settle his foreign relations by an appeal to the sword. When ancient Rome conceived the idea of universal dominion, the demagogues became mighty in the Forum; and, on the other hand, no party rose to power during the Revolution which did not immediately form plans of aggression against some distant country. Long before the Emperor Leopold had spoken of intervention to Louis XVI., Lafayette was busy with plans for revolutionising Belgium, Holland and Ireland. No sooner had Louis and Leopold acknowledged the constitution of 1791, than the Gironde began a war against Austria, Germany and Italy. Immediately after the affair of Valmy, when the Prussians were eagerly desirous of peace, Brissot, Danton and Billaud, were moving heaven and earth to throw all Europe into confusion. We are now about to observe the way in which this zeal for destruction daily increased, and gradually drew all the States of Europe into its vortex. In doing so we shall see, by the way, how completely all the other aims of the Revolution were lost sight of; and how, on this side also, all things tended towards a military dictatorship.

But that which lent a peculiarly momentous character to the period—that which increased tenfold the intensity of every crisis, and the terrors of every danger—was the coincidence of the French aggressions in the West, with the no less comprehensive and equally revolutionary policy of the Russian Empire in the East. It will be necessary, therefore, to bring forward the circumstances connected with this coincidence more prominently before the reader, and, in doing so, to extend the horizon of our observation to the whole of Europe. We have already referred to the policy of Russia; the effect of her war with Turkey, in 1790, upon Germany; the silent opposition of the Emperor Leopold in 1791 to her

schemes for the subjection of Poland and France; and lastly, the important effect of her Polish policy on the relation between Prussia and Austria in the autumn of 1792. The more completely the attention of the States of Central Europe were occupied by the Revolution, the more boldly and vigorously did the Russian Cabinet press forward towards the fulfilment of its all-grasping ambition. The French war and the partition of Poland—events of equal importance to Europe, and exercising a reciprocal influence upon each other—were simultaneously carried into effect. While the other States of Europe became every day more and more dependent on political events, these events were more and more completely under the control of the only two great potentates, the French Committee of Public Safety and the Empress Catharine.

Before entering on the details of these events, therefore, it is necessary to get as clear an idea of the internal nature and traditional policy of the great Slavonian military monarchy, as of the origin of the equally warlike government of France. It is not a little interesting to trace the internal changes of the Russian constitution, which rendered the continuance of peace in Russia simply unnatural and intolerable. From highly dissimilar causes, exactly similar results appear on the Seine and the Neva. As long as an internal condition—produced in one country by the Revolution and in the other by the events of centuries of despotism—continued, there was no hope of legal security or peace in Europe.

CHAPTER II.

POLITICAL PARTIES IN FRANCE.

Resources of the French government.—November 1792.—State of Paris.—Finances.—General desire for war.—Plans against Spain, Italy and Constantinople.—Controversy respecting the German war.—Dumouriez advocates an honourable peace.—Custine favours a warlike propaganda.—The ministers decide for Custine.—Treatment of Louis XVI.

When Dumouriez had driven the Prussian army over the borders, the position of the Republic seemed tolerably secure. The Government was unquestionably stronger than any which had preceded it since 1789; the different parties by which it was surrounded had mutually weakened one another; and the foreign war had invested the Ministry with a hitherto unknown *éclat*. In spite of party feuds there were few men in France who did not rejoice at the retreat of the Prussians; and in spite of all oratorical phrases, there was not one who did not know that the enemy had been conquered, neither by the daggers of the September assassins, nor the orations of the Gironde, but by the army under Dumouriez's command. The Ministry therefore derived all the more strength from the prestige which a great military success always confers, because warlike and national honour appeared to be the only living sentiment in the public mind of France. The excitement of political contest had completely passed away. No one could now be found who would incur a danger, or who even cherished a wish, for any particular form of government, or any idea of internal political life. Since the 10th of August, when the mob had triumphed over King, Assembly and Constitution, the period of intel-

lectual triumphs was gone. Gone were the days in which a success in the rostra was a political act, and a movement on the part of the press, a political event! Even the struggles of parties in the Hall of the Convention had but little serious importance. They were for the most part only the official expression of resolutions taken long before by the real possessors of power; or at most a noisy signal of some impending deeds of violence. He who would attain any real success must have the disposal of the means of material power —money and the sword.

The Government at this juncture had the two strongest levers of despotism in their hands—the avarice and the fear of men. They were assured of the attachment of the army, both by the party politics of the Generals, and the patriotic zeal of the troops, who were not likely to desert the colours under which they had resisted half Europe. The organization of the Home Administration was in ruins; the Departmental governments had just been submitted to a new election under revolutionary auspices; and all regular and equable influence on the country from above was out of the question. But we must remember how weak and untrustworthy were the arrangements made in 1790, and it will then be evident that their decay was rather a gain to the Government than a cause of weakness. For in all the Departments there were, by the side of the dilapidated local Authorities, Government Commissioners, into whose hands the general confusion had thrown the greater part of the local business, and who were at the same time completely above the control of the citizens, and absolutely dependent on the Ministers. From the fact that most of the offices were hereditary, even the ancient Monarchy had nothing approaching to the extent of influence now possessed by the Government; and when compared with the utter helplessness of the central Authority in 1790, the difference is immeasurable. There was, moreover, the necessity of filling up afresh all the principal posts in the Administrations themselves. Then again the great in-

crease in the army gave continual opportunities for making new appointments; while the general disorder rendered it easy to enhance indefinitely the gains of every office by embezzlement and extortion. From these sources the Ministers derived an almost inexhaustible supply of patronage, which secured them the services of a whole army of expectant adventurers, and candidates for office; a state of things which had a most important effect on the relation between the Cabinet and the Convention.[1] For, as we have already observed, the majority in the Assembly was by no means made up by a party founded on political principle. The several party chiefs had but a very small body of trustworthy adherents, while the great mass, in whose hands the decision lay, was composed of a Centre, destitute of political sentiments, and of daily decreasing political morality. Careless of principles, they aimed solely at the enjoyment of political power, and found little difficulty, therefore, in traversing within the space of three years nearly the whole circle of the political compass. Whoever obtained the upper hand in Paris, whether by the arms of the Proletaries, the National Guard, or the troops of the line, was sure to find a compliant Convention.

The state of Paris continued to be, what it had been since the beginning of the Revolution, the vital question for all parties. At that period the following characteristics of this mighty city were easily distinguishable. The great mass of the population was in a state of apathetic exhaustion, into which the massacres of September, the reaction which followed them, and the dangers of war, had successively thrown all classes. No one felt any lively compassion for the fallen cause—for the King and the throne. Few retained

[1] Morris, the American Minister in Paris, several times dwells on this circumstance in his despatches; nor is it difficult to follow him in the occurrences of this period. Every change of Ministry brought with it comprehensive *épurations*, and every party pursued their opponents in power with the reproach of multiplying offices.

any zeal for the Republic with its ever-growing burdens; enthusiasm and public feeling in short had vanished, and the sole prevailing sentiment was the desire of each individual to steer a safe course for himself through the coming storms.[1] This applies to the highest as well as to the lowest class of the citizens,—to the democratic artizans of St. Antoine, to whom the massacres of September had been rather too horrible,[2] as well as to the wealthy inhabitants of the more elegant quarters of the city, to whom even the Gironde seemed much too revolutionary and democratic.[3] To take an active part in public business was thought a disagreeable task. While every body withdrew from service in the National Guard,[4] there was so little feeling of personal safety, that a large number of Deputies always went armed with sword-sticks or pocket pistols.[5] Even the assemblies of the Sections showed no greater zeal, although these, according to the official theory, were to be the proper seat of the popular sovereignty. The average number of voters in each Section was about 4,000; but in the assemblies themselves, only a thin and ragged company of 150, 100, or even fewer, were to be seen, who made decrees in the name of the Sovereign People according to their pleasure.[6] The elections by which the Municipality was at this time renewed were carried on in a similar manner. At the most important—the election of the Mayor—only 11,000 voters could be brought together, that is, about a ninth of those entitled to vote; and 7,000 of these, as we have seen above, first elected Péthion, and, after his resignation in December, a physician

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[1] Moore, *Journal*, II. 450. — [2] Gadol to Roland; Buchez, XXVIII, 93. — [3] Beaulieu, *Essais*, IV. 193, Gadol to Mad. Roland, Oct. 19. — [4] Report of the Commune to the Convention, Jan. 5. — [5] Moore, *Journal*, II. 235. — [6] *Moniteur*, Oct. 25. The *Fédérés* spoke on this subject in the Convention, Dec. 23rd. Biroteau, on the 29th, Gadol to Roland (Buchez, XXVIII. 91); *Il n'y a quelquefois pas 60 personnes; dont 10 du parti agitateur, le reste écoute et lève la main machinalement.*

named Chambon.[1] But even the energy of these, the most revolutionary of the moderate parties, was exhausted by this one effort. At the succeeding elections of Procureur and his Deputies, only 2,000 of that majority remained on the scene of action. The Jacobins on this occasion, by straining every nerve, raised the number of their own voters to 5,000, and thereby gained a momentary victory; but they also left to history an infallible testimony to the fact, that even the great mass of the population of Paris would have nothing to say to them. Those who were thus raised to the head of the administration of Paris were three friends of Marat, and members of the September party. The new Procureur was Chaumette, who, according to his opponents, was a runaway Capuchin, and according to his own testimony had been first a cabin-boy, then *homme de lettres*, and had lastly employed and maintained himself by revolutionary dealings in Paris. His deputies were Real, and Hebert, who was distinguished above the other two. He had formerly been ticket collector at the theatre, and after the Revolution he edited the "*Père Duchesne*," the foulest of all the democratic journals, in which with curses and obscene raillery he led on the proletaries and vagabonds of the capital, to the destruction of existing society.

At first however these appointments had by no means the decisive importance which the character of the elected, and the influence of Paris, might be expected to give them. The course of events no longer depended on speeches and pamphlets, or even on votes and elections. The real question was by how many armed men a petition was backed up, and what forces an insubordinate party could bring into the field. Here, too, the state of things was at this time decidedly favourable to the Government. The sluggish and

[1] The tableau of the Sectional divisions is not without interest. In the Faubourg St. Antoine also Chambon had a small majority; but his Jacobin opponent had the decided advantage in the Cité, and the *Quartier des Halles*.

ever-diminishing army of the National Guard was scarcely taken into account. The Jacobins still possessed the bands which they had long ago raised, and which since September had been regularly organized and paid, and consequently kept up to a certain number by regular additions.[1] But these were too few in number to undertake any armed movement by themselves, as long as the inhabitants of the Faubourgs continued in their state of apathy. They were completely kept in check by the *Fédérés* summoned by the Gironde, whose numbers gradually increased to 5,000, and who through Barbaroux's influence were joined by the Marseillois of the 10th of August.[2] Under these circumstances the Government, which still had a few troops of the line at its disposal in Paris, were complete masters of the situation; provided always that the two parties continued to balance one another, and to hinder each other from getting entire possession of the helm of the State. This is the most satisfactory explanation of the fact that the Government majority steadily refused to listen to party accusations, whether made by Marat against the Gironde, or by Louvet against the assassins of September.

But in spite of all these resources and fortunate chances, the Government could not conceal from themselves that the prospect before them was full of embarrassment and danger. They were especially harassed by the want of money, or, to speak more correctly, by the utter ruin of the public finances. *Assignats*—every where *assignats*—were the sole resource. Their current exchange at this period had fallen to 60 per cent of the nominal value; every new issue depressed them still more; every fall increased the necessities of the Treasury and rendered further issues un-

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[1] Mallet du Pan, *Considérations sur la Rev. Franç.* 64. *Mém.*, II. 52. —
[2] Gadol's Correspondence is full of proofs of this. Moore too (II. 422) speaks of Marat's vexation at the respect with which the Marseillois, more especially, had inspired the Faubourgs.

avoidable. They were involved in a vicious circle of ever-increasing distress, which must sooner or later end in utter ruin. All efforts to bring back the revenue to a healthy state proved futile. Several hundred millions of arrears still remained from the year 1791. Of the tax on land and moveable property for 1792, (estimated at 300 millions) nothing at all had been received on the 1st of November; and from the tax on patents for that same year only 4 millions instead of 22; from the Stamp tax 30 instead of 81; and from the Customs 12 instead of 20 millions.[1] Even these sums could only be obtained by forcing the Districts to hand over the money destined for local expenses to the Exchequer,[2] by which a new disturbance of all provincial affairs was caused, and double losses rendered certain for the future. It became more and more glaringly evident that the first requisite for the productiveness of land is security of property; wherever this is precarious the prosperity of the citizen is wavering and uncertain, and the resources of the State run dry. The most ruinous effects were produced in this direction, as the winter approached, by the programme of the Septembrists. The cry which their Commissioners had raised in favour of a division of landed property, though for the moment suppressed, had fixed itself in the memory of the poor; and the year 1792 ended in France as it had begun, amidst continual *émeutes* of workmen and peasants. The same complaints poured in from all the provinces. In Touraine the authorities lowered the price of bread at the expense of the Commune, to prevent open violence. In Seine et Oise, where the local government hesitated, they were compelled to adopt similar measures by an armed insurrection. In Lyons, where all business was at a standstill, and 30,000 men were out of work, the

[1] Report of Nov. 15. — [2] Report of Dec. 19. By the same artifice the Consulate in 1803 effected an apparent filling up of the deficit, which however is not mentioned in the work of Thiers.

Manufacturers gave 3 millions, and in Marseilles the City authorities gave 2 millions for the purchase of corn. In the North, Lille and Thionville received 8 millions from the State as compensation for losses incurred in war, which they immediately devoted to the support of the people. The whole Centre of the kingdom—the Departments of Sarthe, Eure and Loire, Loire and Cher, Indre et Loire, Loiret and Correze, were in a dangerous state of fermentation. On all sides there was a lack of provisions, and reports were heard of persons being starved to death, of hardhearted Commissioners and treacherous corn monopolists.[1] The real causes of the distress might easily have been ascertained. The importations of corn from foreign countries ceased in consequence of the war, and the home trade was brought to a stand-still by the absence of legal protection. Every town and district kept back its supplies; Havre would allow no provisions to be transported to Rouen, and Rouen would allow nothing to pass through it to Paris; the neighbouring villages had to be compelled by force to send supplies to the capital. While no private person dared to engage in the corn trade, from fear of the *lanterne*, or the guillotine, the different authorities ran up the prices by unsystematic and hasty purchases. The Minister of the Interior bid against the Directories of the Departments; and the agents of the Administration of Paris against the Minister at War. The consequence was that the Government paid 30 per cent more for English corn, than French corn cost in the Departments on the West coast; that 240 pounds of wheat were bought in one department for 20 francs and in another for 97; and that in the same Department the price varied nearly 100 per cent within the space of a fortnight[2]. In Paris the Commune kept down the price of bread at a daily sacrifice of 12,000 francs. It was out of the question to raise this

[1] See the debates of the Convention in October and November. —
[2] Dept. Finistère from 20 to 35 fr. *Moniteur*, Jan. 29, 1793.

sum from the city funds; and as early as October the Convention was obliged to make a grant of 6 millions, and learned, as a reward of their generosity, that the city was 20 millions in arrears with their taxes.[1]

In such a state of things no one could expect a rapid improvement of the finances, and yet the expenditure increased from day to day. On the one hand the Government had to bear the burdens of the war, which the universal profusion had increased to the incredible sum of 140, 160, and even 190 millions a month; on the other side they were weighed down by the distress of the people in town and country, whose demands upon the public purse no one ventured to calculate; and to these were added the selfish claims of those in power, which a thorough change of system would have reduced to nothing. It is a striking mark of the miserable corruption of the times, that the financial question had greater influence than any other on the subsequent course of the Revolution, and on the foreign policy of France; and that there is no other point of view from which we can so clearly observe the tendencies of different parties.

The Ministry and their adherents in the Convention had but one solution for all these difficulties. No one thought of curtailing the expenses; and Roland alone reflected on the means of introducing greater order into the State. The other Ministers, elated by their success in the late campaign, unhesitatingly adhered to their programme—to support the Republic by the booty of continued warfare. Since their own Treasury was empty, their conquered neighbours must furnish pay for the French armies; the mass of *assignats*, by which France was crushed, must be distributed among the surrounding nations. The Revolution, these Statesmen thought, had confiscated every thing in France which could be taken under any political pretext; the next

[1] Clavière, *Financial Report.* Feb. 1. 1793.

step was to make the other countries of Europe assist in defraying their expenses. All the recent negotiations with Prussia therefore were regarded, not as preparations for the conclusion of peace, but only as weapons for future victories; as long as there was a revolutionary deficit, Europe could look for no repose.

There was but one voice in the Cabinet as to the necessity of continuing the war, and carrying it beyond the frontiers of France. Lebrun, the Foreign Minister, hated Austria, because it had enslaved his second home Liege; and England, because when he was supporting himself by journalism, it had refused him a pension.[1] He had been inspired at an earlier period with his cosmopolitan zeal by Brissot, and with his defiant insolence by Dumouriez; but he now seemed to have outgrown his instructors, and concocted revolutionary plans against the whole of Europe. Garat, the new Minister of Justice, and Grouvelle, the Secretary of the Council, gave him their unconditional support. Of the rest, the Minister of Marine, Monge, a violent republican, rejoiced at every rupture with a crowned head; Clavière, Minister of Finance, was waiting for an opportunity of seizing the treasures of the Belgian provinces; and the Minister at War, Pache, seemed to have no other wish than to suit himself to his colleagues and the popular opinion. Even Roland, little as such a policy of plunder abroad agreed with his system of order at home, was after all of opinion, that until the completion of the constitution, the unruly troops and ambitious Generals must not remain on French soil.[2] All therefore united their endeavours to carry the war beyond the borders of France.

The different parties vied with one another in their eagerness to carry out these views; even the Gironde, conser-

[1] Letters from Miles to Lebrun, published by the former, and made use of in the work of Herbert Marsh, which, will be referred to presently. — [2] Dumouriez, III. 284.

vative as it had become in other respects, still continued to rave about the renovation of the world, the overthrow of tyrants, and the dawn of a universal spring upon the nations. "We must break with all the Cabinets at once," said Brissot.[1] They seriously reckoned on the sympathy of the nations, and indulged the hope that on the first appearance of the French armies, they would drive away their oppressors, and enter into a revolutionary union of brotherhood with their deliverers. The fiscal side of the ministerial plans indeed was little in harmony with this charming picture; and Clavière, the Finance Minister, who cared far more for the goods of the Belgians than their liberty, entirely disagreed with his colleagues on this point.[2] This divergence of opinions, however, could only become important after the victory, and for the present the Girondists were as eager for invasion and battle as the Ministerialists themselves.

The great body of the Jacobins had still fewer objections to make to the proceedings of the Ministers. Since the quarrel between Robespierre and Brissot, war had not been exactly a favourite word with the Club, which had other and nearer wishes than fights and battles. But the successful affairs of Valmy and Mayence had filled even them with enthusiasm; and the idea of overthrowing every tyrant on the face of the globe was as warmly taken up by the Mountain as by the Gironde. Robespierre, indeed, often chid the adventurous madness and malicious cunning, with which the Ministers endeavoured to extend the war beyond all bounds; but he would have reproached them with no less bitterness for every step towards peace, as a certain proof of treachery. His opposition to Clavière was only in regard to the mode

[1] The *Homme d'état* quotes an oft-quoted letter of Brissot to Dumouriez, in which these sentiments are enlarged upon. The contents coincide exactly with Brissot's views, yet its authenticity seems to us highly improbable. The Girondists hated Dumouriez heartily; Gensonné alone corresponded with him till the middle of Dec. and then likewise renounced his friendship. — [2] Dumouriez, III. 357.

of committing violence. Clavière wished for foreign plunder to spare his own countrymen further confiscations; Robespierre's chief object was to establish a tyranny at home, and he approved of war only so far as it seemed to favour his designs. The policy of conquest was still more certain of the support of the third great party-chief, Danton, — the only one of the democratic leaders who had not suffered from the reaction of September. As member of the Convention he had resigned his place in the Ministry, but had made the greatest use of his former position to promote his personal influence. He had, as we have seen, a hand in every transaction, and had supported Dumouriez in the war, Servan in his military preparations, and Lebrun in his negotiations with Prussia. He had taken care to bring forward his adherents in every Department; he had formed connexions on all sides, and appropriated money from every source, with a view to further operations. While the rest of his party were excluded from all offices and honours, he was still able, in secret at least, to feel himself a member of the Government; and this connexion had a most important effect upon his general views. Enthusiasm for any ideal was a thing of which he had never been capable; but now all his desires were satisfied; his practical eye was sharpened, and his zeal for the Revolution entirely at an end. He was convinced that it would be a folly to talk any longer to the French of freedom; and considered that the State had arrived at that stage of the Roman Empire, when Cato was a fool and Cæsar's dictatorship a necessary evil.[1] He was too indolent to strive after this dictatorship for himself; an alliance with the Gironde was rendered impossible by the furious hatred which they bore him; and he despised his own party from the bottom of his heart. He understood,

[1] Morris to Jefferson, April 15. 1794. Danton always thought, and what was worse, expressed his belief, that a popular Government was impossible in France, the State &c. &c.

of course, his own position too well to give up his democratic attitude; he still continued to be the mighty demagogue, the thundering orator of the club and the leader of the Mountain; but in reality he had no other wish than to enjoy the booty he had already secured, and to derive all possible advantage from the movement for the future. He was therefore entirely in accord with the Ministers, in respect both to their expectant and neutral position between the different parties, and their lust of foreign booty and conquest; and it was no small or unimportant weight which he threw into the scale.

At the end of October, therefore, the Government was resolved to assume the offensive on every side. Warlike preparations both by land and sea had been going on since the middle of September against Spain. Not that the French Government had any ground of complaint against King Charles IV., but the low state of the Spanish army led them to hope for rapid and splendid success, and this was enough to influence the restless ambition of Brissot and Lebrun. The Court of Madrid, in spite of all its wrath against the Revolution, had followed the same course as the Emperor Leopold, and made the acceptance of the Constitution by Louis XVI. a pretext for suspending all serious preparations against France. When, however, the Gironde, at the end of 1791, began their demagogical and warlike operations, and endeavoured to raise an insurrection in the frontier provinces of Spain, the exiled Princes met with liberal support at Madrid. But the Spanish Government was far too weak and incapable to display any lasting energy in any direction. On the 2nd of March 1792, therefore, Count Aranda, a veteran of the liberal and philosophical party of the time of Charles III., became foreign Minister at Madrid. Aranda made no secret of his predilection for France; and the military weakness of Spain made him especially anxious to preserve its neutrality at every cost, at the commencement of the war. Meanwhile, however, the 20th of June, the 10th

of August, the September murders, and the abolition of Monarchy, rapidly succeeded one another in Paris, producing, of course, a most terrible impression in Madrid, and exciting grief, anxiety and indignation. The Spanish police kept a sharp eye upon the French settlers in their country, and French exiles found a warm reception at Court. The Spanish Ambassador at St. Petersburg made bitter complaints of the sluggishness of the German operations in the field, which he said were quite inadequate to make head against the monster of Revolution. But the experience of others made Spain still less inclined to incur the dangers of a war; and when the French Ambassador demanded, in a threatening tone the withdrawal of the cordon of troops in Catalonia, and the recognition of the Republic, Aranda not only expressed his willingness to concede these points, but agreed to pay France 4 million francs as a compensation for its defensive preparations.[1] This weak compliance fanned the warlike spirit of Paris into a blaze. Brissot believed that on the first appearance of the French troops on the other side of the Pyrenees, the tottering throne of Charles IV. would crumble into dust; that at the first fluttering of the French flag the colonies of South America would break out into tumultuous aspirations after freedom.[2] Under this impression Lebrun would have proposed a declaration of war against Spain in October, had not the formation of the army of the Pyrenees proceeded so slowly, that Servan just at this time reported that he had not a single battalion ready to march.[3]

The Ministers were all the more eager to strike decisive blows in the already existing theatres of war. On the 10th of October they came to a resolution, on a plan which had

[1] From the correspondence of the Prussian Ambassador in Madrid, as well as of the Dutch Chargés d'affaires in Vienna and St. Petersburg. *Conf.* Baumgarten, *Geschichte Spaniens zur Zeit der französischen Revolution.* — [2] *Brissot à ses Commettans*, passim. — [3] Correspondence of the Army of the South. *Depot de la Guerre*, Paris.

been long under consideration, for the occupation of Sardinia. Admiral Truguet received orders to hold a portion of his fleet in readiness for this expedition. General Anselme in Nice, and General Paoli in Corsica, were to furnish the land force, and the inhabitants of the island were to be invited to throw off the royal yoke.[1] At the meeting of the 24th of October, the question of Naples was brought before the Cabinet, and the discussion immediately enlarged the sphere of observation. The French Government had long conceived the idea of employing the power of Turkey to make an unlooked-for diversion in Eastern Europe, against the attacks of Austria and the hostility of Russia. They had induced Semonville, an old member, first of Lafayette's and then of Mirabeau's secret police—who on the fall of his former patrons had placed himself with equal subserviency at the disposal of their successors—to undertake a mission to Constantinople. On his arrival there he was to rouse the Porte to a war against the two Imperial Courts, and to cherish an understanding with all the malcontents among the Hungarians and Cossacks. Intelligence was received, however, that Acton, the Neapolitan Minister, had already made representations to the Porte, to the effect that Semonville should not be received by the Turkish Court at all. Whereupon Truguet was ordered to send off a squadron without delay to Naples, and to threaten that city with bombardment, unless the King should give the Republic the most striking satisfaction, by delivering up his Minister. When this had been done, the victorious fleet was to convey the French Ambassador to Constantinople, and spread the terror of the French arms along all the shores of the Black Sea.

At the same Cabinet Council, on the 24th of October, the leading principles of the most important war—that against the German Powers—were discussed and agreed upon. The

[1] This and the following information is derived from the Protocols of the Council of Ministers in the Imperial Archives at Paris.

decision on these points was influenced by circumstances of a secret and personal nature, by which the future course of events was to be mainly decided.

Dumouriez had just returned in triumph from Champagne to Paris, in order to discuss with the Minister his plan of operations against Belgium. He was enthusiastically welcomed by the whole of Paris, with the exception of Marat, who denounced him as a Cromwell and a Monk in one person, and called him to account for his severity against insubordinate Parisian volunteers. The presence of the General in the capital contributed no little to extend and influence the warlike ardour of the people. He was more conscious than ever of his own strength and importance; his aspirations had risen with his success, and his wishes took the form of imperious demands.[1] His ambition had hitherto led him to play the demagogue in order to obtain his objects; now, however, the spirit of the soldier was fully awakened in him, and he showed only too plainly his contempt for the heroes of the desk, the rostra and the press, and his disgust at the wild disorder of the State. He did not take much trouble to conceal such sentiments; on the contrary, he frankly pointed out to the Ministers that it would be necessary to make him Commander-in-chief of all the French forces, with unlimited power. It was only, he said, by thus bringing unity and energy into their operations, that the war could be brought to a rapid and successful termination. All the Ministers, not even excepting his old comrade Lebrun, were greatly startled by this unceremonious mode of proceeding; but they allowed him for the present to bring forward and explain his plan of operations, the leading features of which are already known. The objects

[1] His Memoirs pass over his position at this period, and indeed all the principal crises of his life, in silence. The truth is revealed partly in his published correspondence with Pache, and completely in the secret despatches of the War Ministry, and the Protocols of the Ministerial Council.

aimed at were to isolate Austria from the rest of Europe, to hold out hopes of peace to Prussia, and to give Germany reasons to be satisfied with the conduct of France. He accordingly proposed that their chief efforts should be directed against the Austrian Netherlands, but that even these should not be conquered, but really set free, and thus united to their liberators in firmer friendship. The armies of the Rhine and the Moselle were only to advance to the Rhine, partly to support Dumouriez's movements in Belgium, and partly to avoid giving offence to Prussia, and Custine was to evacuate Frankfort. The policy of a general peace having been once for all rejected, the war was to be waged with a view to political influence in Europe; but it was to be directed towards fixed objects, and carried on with political and diplomatic weapons, without the violent fluctuations, the licence, and the rapacity, of the revolutionary system.

But just on this very account Dumouriez was not supported by a single voice in the Ministry; and he was met, moreover, even on the military question, by the most decided opposition of Custine, at that time a very popular and highly influential General. The latter still indulged in the splendid dream of utterly unhinging the holy Roman Empire. The King of Prussia, he thought, would make no great opposition to this if they promised him a considerable portion of the booty, and more gentle and considerate treatment of Louis XVI. He urged, moreover, that the spirit of freedom was rapidly spreading in Germany itself; that he had awarded to Böhmer and Wedekind 500 francs a month for their services (Böhmer soon after received 6000 francs from Paris as a gratuity); and that it would be as easy as it was necessary to extend the blessings of liberty to these happy regions. He added, that he could at any time acquire the important city of Mannheim for a payment of 1,200,000 francs; and that his only reason for not having already surprised it, was that the neutrality of the Bavarian Palatinate appeared to him still more important for the present than the

possession of the city.[1] Under these circumstances he demanded a reinforcement of 40,000 men, the cooperation of the Moselle army, and the subordination of Dumouriez's operations to the furtherance of his own. He declared that if these were granted him, he would dictate peace to the Emperor in Vienna, without giving France any other trouble than that of collecting German contributions. All his despatches breathed a spirit of devotion and zeal towards the Republic, which placed him in a most favourable contrast to the haughty, arbitrary and didactic Dumouriez.

The Ministry soon came to a decision. To invest Dumouriez with the chief command was not to be thought of, and he was entrusted as General of the army of Ardennes, —which was to be suitably reinforced—with the invasion of Belgium. It was not till after repeated representations that he gained from them a resolution, that at any rate all the Generals employed in that quarter should be subject to his orders. In all other respects Custine's views gained the upper hand. Custine himself was not recalled from the other side of the Rhine, but was re-inforced by the Ministry to the utmost of their power. To support him, Kellermann received order after order to press forward down the Moselle as far as Coblentz, however much fatigued his troops might be by the toils of September. Dumouriez moreover was directed, on the 24th of October, not to take up his winter quarters until he arrived at Cologne on the Rhine; which order had in view to give as broad a base as possible to Custine's aggressive operations. All these arrangements affected Dumouriez the more sensibly, because the same Government which imposed so extensive a task upon him against his will, threw every conceivable difficulty in his way in the execution of it. The equipment of his forces was delayed, and it was only through the good nature of

[1] Protocol of the Ministerial Council and the Correspondence of the Army of the Rhine, in the Archives at Paris.

Santerre that he obtained the necessary artillery from the arsenal at Paris; in short he found himself surrounded on all sides by jealousy and suspicion. The Ministry, indeed, agreed to his proposal to treat the Belgians as friends; and the Convention itself sanctioned a proclamation offering them freedom and fraternity; but both Ministry and Convention were far from intending to allow the General the slightest political influence over the future Belgian Republic. On the contrary, immediately after Dumouriez's departure the Cabinet came to an agreement that no General should correspond directly with the Convention, or promote his officers to a higher rank, or treat with the enemy under any circumstances whatsoever. All these resolutions are doubtless in strict accordance with the sound principles of State policy, but at that time they could only appear to Dumouriez as the offspring of hostile distrust.

In spite, however, of all these differences, the military power of the Republic was once more set in motion, and the first step taken in a career of which no one could see the end. But this external developement of the Revolution coincided with the most critical of all internal questions, the fate of the captive King.

Up to this time the Government had no settled views respecting the treatment of Louis XVI. Not one of its members probably had any wish to put him to death; but whether alive or dead he was to them a source of embarrassment and danger. The Jacobins for many weeks past had been incessantly calling for his blood; for in their case the greatest cruelty was seconded by the most urgent party interest. What other theme, indeed, could there be so pregnant as this with every human passion; so calculated to call back to the minds of the Faubourgs every event of the Revolution, and to kindle once more the fanaticism of its hottest and bloodiest days? To the Jacobin club itself, which called the September massacres its confession of faith, the sparing of Louis XVI. appeared a crying monstrosity. The

leaders were well aware that the majority of the people were better inclined to the King than to themselves, and were therefore eager to stifle the re-action with the blood of the Monarch. By themselves however, they had not even the power to get up a discussion on the subject in the Convention. If they spoke of the annihilation of the tyrant, they were reproached in reply with the tyranny of September. Other means must be sought to set the majority in motion.

These means were found in the relation of France to foreign countries. The independent members of the Convention—those who were guided not by a party chief, but by the Government,—shared the enthusiasm of Lebrun for the revolution of Europe. They were of opinion that every fresh humiliation heaped on the head of Louis would be a death-stroke to the cause of monarchy itself. If the nations had not yet been enlightened as to the rottenness of royalty, surely the last gleam of lustre would fade from the crown, if Louis were forced, like a common criminal, to undergo the horrors of a public trial. They had no more intention than the Ministers of putting the unhappy man to death; Barère, the genuine type of these men of no party, said that the trial was just as likely to end in a sentence of further imprisonment; in which case not the slightest change would occur in the personal fate of Louis. The same view was taken by Danton,[1] who had received money enough from the King to allay his animosity against him. While he breathed nothing but blood and death in the Jacobin club, he secretly expressed his opinion that the Convention ought, for appearance sake, to condemn the King, but that they could afterwards bring their sentence before the sovereign people for its sanction, from whom Louis had nothing worse to expect than further incarceration.

The Ministers were decided at last by peculiar diplomatic considerations to give the signal for the commencement of

[1] *Brissot à ses Commettans.*

the trial. The negotiations with Prussia dragged on, as we have seen, in an almost resultless interchange of notes. Prussia insisted on the admission of Germany and Austria to the treaty of peace. And though the King no longer demanded the restoration of the French throne, he continued to express the highest interest in the personal safety of Louis and the royal family; and it was quite in accordance with these feelings that Lucchesini answered the agent, Mandrillon, at Cologne on the 29th of October. It occurred to Lebrun to make use of the humane sympathy of the King for a diplomatic master-stroke; and he commissioned Mandrillon to offer the King the freedom of Louis XVI., if the former would forego his other claims, and enter into a separate peace with France.[1] Such a proposal would naturally have the greater weight in proportion to the imminence of the danger from which Louis was snatched; the Ministry therefore no longer hesitated to allow the criminal proceedings against Louis in the Convention to take their course.

Beaulieu, *Essais*, IV. 302.

CHAPTER III.

BRUSSELS, FRANKFORT, LONDON.

Occupation of Belgium by Dumouriez.—Pache, the minister at war joins the mountain.—His quarrel with Dumouriez.—Effect upon Belgium.—All nations summoned to freedom, nov. 19th.—Negotiations with prussia at coblentz.—Lebrun proposes an offensive alliance.—Breaking off of negotiations.—Storming of frankfort.—Condition of holland.—French plans of attack.—French intrigues in england.—Pitt's desire of peace.—England's defensive measures.—Impression produced thereby in france.—Postponement of dutch expedition.—Exchange of the propagandist policy for a policy of conquest.

When Dumouriez, towards the end of October, assumed the chief command in the Belgian campaign, he found himself opposed by the united forces of the enemy, which were drawn up in the neighbourhood of Mons. They were commanded by Albert, Duke of Saxe-Teschen, who had just been joined by General Clairfait, on the latter's return from Champagne. General Valence, who at the head of 16,000 men ought to have cut off Clerfait's march at the Sambre, had been delayed by Jacobin intrigues; so that, while Hohenlohe-Kirchberg with little more than 10,000 men was covering Luxembourg and Treves, Duke Albert had drawn together about 26,000 men under the walls of Mons. In this position of affairs, Dumouriez determined to take the bull by the horns, and discarding all strategical manœuvres, to carry the Austrian position by storm. By summoning Harville to join him with his corps, Dumouriez raised the numbers of his forces to 40,000 men; his right wing rested on the army of Valence, and his left on General Labourdonnaye's corps of 20,000, which was to operate against Belgium; and he was continually reinforced by the influx of volunteers. Under

these circumstances the prospect of a hot engagement had nothing discouraging in it; on the contrary, Dumouriez wished to reward his troops for their patient endurance in Champagne by the glory of a bold assault. He began his operations on the 28th of October, drove in the first division of the Imperialists on the 3rd of November, and followed them up vigorously until the evening of the 5th, when the Austrians took up a position on the heights of Jemappes, which was further strengthened by redoubts.

Both armies then encamped—each in a widely extended semicircle—with their wings nearly touching one another, so that their bivouac fires skirted the entire horizon as with a mighty chain. On the 6th, at daybreak, the French commenced the attack by a violent cannonade, which produced so little impression on the veteran troops of the enemy, that in spite of their superior numbers, the French leaders either did not venture to storm the Austrian position, or, where they attempted it, saw their men hastily retire. It was not until midday that Dumouriez succeeded in imparting to his troops his own restless energy. He himself stormed the redoubts of the left wing almost at the same moment in which his adjutant Thouvenot was storming those of the right. In the centre Louis Philippe—General Egalité—collected the retreating battalions for a final onset, which put the French in possession of the village of Jemappes—the key of the enemy's position. Thereupon Clerfait commenced his retreat the more quickly, because Harville was already threatening to cut him off from Mons. The Austrians lost 6—7,000, and the French 4,000 men, but the fate of the campaign was fully decided by the result of this engagement.[1] It proved the impossibility of resisting the superior numbers of the French; it demoralised the Austrian army, which began to suffer greatly from desertion; and lastly, it gave the signal of revolt to all the malcontents

[1] Where we have deviated from the public accounts we have followed the despatches of the Military archives at Paris.

in Belgium. Mons capitulated two days after the battle, and the citizens, who were thoroughly democratic in their opinions, greeted the General as a liberator. "I expect," said Dumouriez to them, "to march into Vienna in four weeks, and I shall there treat the Emperor with all imaginable consideration."[1] Eight days afterwards Brussels opened its gates to the victor; at the same time Valence marched against Namur, and Labourdonnaye advanced through Flanders upon Antwerp, and everywhere the fortresses capitulated. The Austrians were in hopeless retreat, and it was not till they reached the Meuse that they stood their ground in a few skirmishes on their rear.

As Dumouriez had marched out with 80,000 men, and after a single battle gained possession of one of the richest lands of Europe, it seemed to depend solely on the will of the Government to use this powerful army in dealing a destructive blow either on Germany or Holland. But meanwhile the Revolution had diffused its spirit of disaffection and disunion even into its own army, and the terrible force before which Europe began to tremble had no longer any real existence.

During the last few weeks a turn had taken place in affairs at Paris, which had the most important effects on the course of the Revolution in the following year. Hitherto, as we have seen, the Jacobins had not a single vote in the Ministry. The Cabinet was tolerably free from party bias; Roland was a decided Girondist; and if Lebrun or Clavière had now and then an understanding with Danton, it is difficult to say on which side concessions were made. But in the beginning of November, the whole state of affairs was unexpectedly changed. Pache had succeeded Servan as Minister at War on the 19th of October. He had hitherto been a subordinate *protégé* of Roland, and had been recommended by the latter for promotion to the important post, as a quiet hard-working and accommodating man. But no sooner was

[1] Despatches of Van Haeften, Dutch Ambassador in Vienna.

he established in office than he bestowed all his attention and services on the Jacobins, and threw himself into the arms—not of Danton or Robespierre—but of Marat and the men of the Hôtel de Ville, Chaumette and Hebert. At the moment when all the resources of the land were employed in a general war, the whole control of military affairs in France fell into the hands of the wildest of all the revolutionary factions.

As parties then stood in Paris, this change was not only a heavy loss to the Gironde, and a serious danger to the moderate party, but effected an entire reconstruction in the interior of the Mountain itself, whose position it infinitely strengthened. After the 10th of August the latter had formed a single and perfectly united body, with the Jacobins and Cordéliers as their allied army, the Municipality under Robespierre and Marat as their head-quarters, and the Ministry of Justice under Danton as the seat of the highest control. It was by the cooperation of these agents that the September massacres had been brought about. Since then Danton had outgrown his former associates; he no longer sympathised with the great body of the Jacobins, and began with a clique of personal friends to form relations with the independent men of no party in the Centre. Pache's connexion with Hebert caused a second severance in the interior of the Jacobin faction, by suddenly investing the Hôtel de Ville with an abundance of influence and wealth, such as it had not possessed even during the September massacres. This section of the ultras, therefore, now stood firmly on their own feet, and felt that they had no longer any urgent need of Danton's influence in the Convention, or Robespierre's support in the Club. We have already observed that at that time 160 million francs passed through the hands of the War Minister every month. Pache gave his friends of the Hôtel de Ville the freest access to his bureaux and his treasures; made Vincent, Hebert's most intimate associate, his Chief Secretary, filled up all the posts

in his office with genuine Democrats, and entrusted the management of the Commissariat to *protégés* of the Hôtel de Ville. Thenceforward the saloons of this Ministry were open to every demagogue, and all the officials addressed one another with the familiar *tu*. The Sovereign People walked about in wooden shoes among State documents and brandy bottles, and in the evening the wife of the Minister with her daughter and sister visited the barracks of the *Fédérés*, to rouse their enthusiasm in the cause of freedom, and to alienate their affections from the Gironde. The cause of mob-rule, which, since the reaction of September, had with difficulty been kept alive from day to day, received fresh life-blood and was once more strong and flourishing. We shall presently see how the weapons thus supplied by Pache were employed in the trial of Louis XVI.

With the new War Ministry the second epoch of the Revolution began for the troops;[1] and what the 10th Aug. was for the State, Pache's Ministry was for the Army. During the perils of the Prussian onset, the Democrats of September had not ventured to meddle much with the regiments. They were contented that the troops acknowledged and defended them, and allowed themselves to be assisted in doing so by the national volunteers. With the exception of a few emigrant officers, therefore, it was the same old royal army, which just by means of the war was restored to its hitherto slackened military discipline. The troops of the line still differed very decidedly from the national guards, and looked down with very candid contempt on the volunteers. The higher officers especially, the generals and their staffs, belonged almost without exception to the liberal fractions of the old noblesse, who were ready to fight for

[1] We needly hardly say that the following account is based on the Papers of the War Ministry. The special vouchers will be given in abundance in the course of the events, as, in consideration of the importance of the case, which is not sufficiently cleared up in the published accounts, various details cannot well be spared.

their country and against the Emigrés, but entertained towards the Mountain and Hôtel de Ville no other feeling than rage and disgust. But it was to these very men of the Hôtel de Ville that the army, by Pache's interposition, was now subjected. They were well aware of the feelings of the officers towards themselves, and immediately resolved to free the soldiers as completely from the tyranny of the Staff, as the citizens from the oppression of the moneyed classes. These experienced Demagogues saw that it was only thus—only by proclaiming complete insubordination—that the military spirit could be banished, which metamorphosed a crowd of conscript peasant boys into the organized members of an army, and distinguished them, both by manners and the sentiment of honour, from the armed mob of the capital. Party interest predominated over every consideration of country and the fate of the war. The Austrians were beaten and driven far away. The reactionary sentiments of the officers appeared much the most pressing danger, and, at the worst, they hoped, under a new body of officers devoted to themselves, to overcome any new difficulty which might unexpectedly arise.

None of the generals were made to feel the change at head-quarters more quickly or more thoroughly than Dumouriez. Pache and Vincent knew his irrepressible tendency towards political and diplomatic intrigue. They knew that the army under his command would not long remain the passive tool of Chaumette's and Marat's ideas. They had a correct foreboding that a well-ordered and high spirited army was incompatible with the continuance of mob government; and the more strikingly Dumouriez's high capacity was brought to light, the more resolutely fixed was their determination to ruin him before all others. The weapon which lay readiest to their hands was the Commissariat of the army, the mode of conducting which was closely connected with the principle on which the war itself was carried on. Dumouriez fully intended to pay for all that he

wanted in Belgium in hard cash; and in general, by the exercise of order and consideration, to respect the well-being of the country, and thereby to secure the prosperity of his own army. He thought that the question of the re-payment of the total expenses should be settled with the Belgian republic at the end of the war. Such views however ran entirely counter to the schemes of all the Ministers. Some were desirous of deriving advantage from the Belgian treasures as quickly as possible; others thought that no French silver, but only French paper, should be put in circulation in Belgium. Pache's officials were highly indignant because Dumouriez endeavoured to establish a separate and independent administration for Belgium; and the artisans in Paris pronounced it an act of treason to deprive them of the profit of furnishing supplies to the army. On this point Cambon and Clavière entirely agreed with the Jacobins, and in spite of Lebrun's scruples, it was resolved to cut up Dumouriez's plan by the roots. His Belgian contracts were annulled, his agents were arrested and brought to trial, and in their stead a Committee was appointed in Paris to make purchases for the army, under the presidency of a member of the Municipality named Bidermann, and an Alsatian Jew, *Cerf* Beer. This board was exclusively empowered to furnish all supplies for all the French armies, and was directed to contract for the necessary work, as far as possible, with Frenchmen alone. Hence it came to pass that Belgian corn was transported to Paris, there to be ground and baked for the army in Belgium: that the army of the Rhine received a large supply of shoes at from 8 to 12 francs a pair, which were soled with pasteboard; and that Dumouriez's cavalry had for many week no other fodder than what they had taken from the Austrians. The worst thing was that, according to the decree, even the operations of this Committee were not to begin till the new year, while all the previous arrangements were annulled at once; so that for six weeks, the army was officially directed to live on air, or by plunder.

When the complaints grew louder and louder—when the artillery lost their horses for want of food, and four-fifths of the infantry went barefoot in the middle of winter, and the volunteers were deserting first by hundreds and then by thousands from frost and cold[1]—when Dumouriez wrote that he could neither advance a step, nor repel the attacks of the enemy, unless they sent him large supplies and a reinforcement of 20,000 men—the friends of Marat were beyond measure delighted that the dreaded dictator had been disarmed; and Cambon declared that Belgium must pay for her freedom with her own money. The Minister at War, who, as a good Jacobin, had no taste either for an aggressive war or for military glory, reported on all hands that he had given every necessary orders; but the reports from the army prove beyond all doubt that nothing at all was really done.[2]

We may easily imagine the effect which these proceedings must have had upon a general of Dumouriez's character. At the commencement of the campaign, however great might be his contempt for the Ministerial scribes, he had no idea of resistance; but the very measures which the Ministers adopted against him out of mistrust, roused him first to disobedience and ultimately to revolt. He received the order to force the circulation of the *assignats*, but declared by return of post that it was impossible to execute it; and he continued to draw ready money for his necessities, partly from French sources, and partly from Belgian loans. Pache and Bidermann vied with one another in sending Commissioners, the gist of whose instructions was, to confiscate Belgian property under various pretences, and to excite the Belgian mob. The General, on the other hand, openly de-

[1] The Volunteers of 1791, moreover, had only taken service till Dec. I. 1792. — [2] Dumouriez in his Memoirs gives minute information respecting these affairs. Thiers repeats his statements, and in spite of the opposition raised to them by democratic writers, we can only confirm their accuracy from the M.S. correspondence.

clared, that he would allow neither robbery nor anarchy in Belgium. He was immoveably fixed in this resolution both by private and political reasons. He had been acquainted with Belgium, as we have seen, for many years, and had thoroughly prepared the way for its conquest by his personal connexions. He had entered into relations both with the clerical and democratic opposition to Austria; he had promised to both the fulfilment of all their wishes, and immediately after the victory of Jemappes, he had greeted Belgium as a free country and an ally of France. He considered his own honour, therefore, pledged to the friendly treatment of the country. But he also considered it to the interest of France that her Northern frontier should be protected by a friendly and flourishing Republic, and that on this account Belgium ought to be preserved from the excesses of Parisian mob-rule. And lastly, it seemed to him highly desirable to shew himself to the Belgians in the light of a protector and liberator from the power of the Jacobins, and thus to gain their support in case of need against his own Ministry.

It was indeed no easy task to defend himself on all sides in such a position. Having once occupied the country, he could not possibly remain on an equally good footing with all the different Belgian parties. He was obliged at his first entrance to make his choice; and, as was to be expected, he decided for the democratic or Vonck party. While still at Mons, he proclaimed, with the sanction of the Convention, the abolition of the existing Constitution and a new election of a provisional Government by universal suffrage; on these conditions he promised to treat the country as an ally of France. But the insignificance of the democrats in Belgium then became apparent. It was only in Hennegau and Liege that they really had a majority;[1] in almost all other places

[1] For the condition of Belgium, and the events of this period, gathered from the official papers of the different provinces and towns, *vid.* Borgnet, *Hist. des Belges*, Vol. II.

the people had to be forced by the French soldiers to hold an election, and even then the members of the old Chambers were for the most part re-elected. In Brussels the people broke the windows of the Vonkites; the Church of St. Gudule, where the election was carried on, was surrounded by French artillery, and the electors were at last compelled by blows of the sabre to nominate the democratic candidates. It was in vain that Dumouriez,—who was in constant fear of an outbreak of Parisian lust of conquest—urged the Belgians to establish a general government, and to raise an army of 40,000 men. The patriots in Paris took great offence at this proposal, regarding such armaments as directed, not against the Austrians, but against themselves;[1] and the Belgian provinces remained immovable in their stubborn reserve. When the destitution of the French army had reached such a pitch that the starving soldiers were driven to exactions and plunder, the ill-feeling of the people increased so greatly that Dumouriez apprehended a revolt, and the Moniteur reported from Brussels, that the watchfulness of the General could alone prevent a fresh revolution in the so lately emancipated city.

Amidst such difficulties and vexations the victor of Jemappes slowly continued his triumphant march through Belgium. Those in power in Paris allowed him to work his way as he best could. They had themselves, (notwithstanding the ruin of their best army) no fear of foreign countries; on the the contrary, they felt themselves in the middle of November still nearer than ever to their grand object—the revolutionizing of Europe; and considered the moment arrived to proclaim to the Universe the plans which they had hitherto carried on in secresy. Many a speech on the liberation of Europe had resounded from the tribune of the Convention during the debates concerning the fall of Louis XVI., when, on the 19th of November, some bailiwicks of the small Ger-

[1] General Labourdonnaye to the Minister at War (unpublished).

man State of Nassau-Saarbrücken prayed for help against their Despots. In the existing condition of the world, this magnificent circumstance seemed of sufficient importance to call forth a grand declaration of French policy. The Convention, therefore, amidst unanimous plaudits, issued a decree; that France offered her aid to all nations who were striving after freedom, and would give her Generals the necessary instructions to carry out her will. The decree was translated into all the languages of Europe, and ordered to be distributed in every country. A subsequent motion to the effect that this decree did not apply to friendly governments was negatived by a vote to proceed with the "order of the day."

In later times this decree has been often called a mere set of bombastic phrases, or a clumsy boast, in which a sensible government would see no danger, and least of all a *casus belli*. But the opinion of the revolutionary parties themselves at that time was a very different one. After the publication of that decree, several London clubs no longer hesitated publicly and repeatedly to send envoys to the Convention to offer the fraternity of England, "about to rise in revolt," and to receive in return the official assurance of protection and assistance. Towards the end of the month the Diocese of Basle made its revolution under the guidance of Gobel the Bishop of Paris, who had been despatched thither by Lebrun.[1] It established itself under the name of the Rauracian Republic, and was placed under the armed protection of General Biron. In Geneva the democratic party raised its head more boldly every day, and only waited for the arrival of General Kellermann, who was sent to the Army of the Alps, to execute its *coup d'état*. Deputations from Nice and Savoy arrived in Paris, the former despatched by the provisional Administrators, and the latter by the new popular representation which had just been established

[1] Protocol of the Ministerial Council, Oct. 29th.

under the guidance of the French deputy Simon, and by the aid of French troops. They both preferred a petition to be incorporated into the great family of the French nation. This was a step beyond the emancipation of the world; it was a practical commentary on the meaning of the disinterestedness of the Parisian democracy. Gregoire, the president of the Convention, in his reply, first announced that freedom was about to explode in two different parts of the world—in England and in the interior of Asia. He then enlarged upon the advantages of union to both countries, and concluded with the cry:—"All Governments are our enemies, all Peoples are our allies; either we shall fall or all nations will become free." The incorporation of Savoy was proclaimed almost without discussion amidst thunders of applause.

It was impossible to announce the external objects of the revolutionary policy by stronger words or more decided actions. In the former part of the Revolution, France had renounced its respect for its own public law; and now, in the face of Europe, it proclaimed an equal disregard for the law of nations. One step was the necessary consequence of the other, and Lafayette's "Rights of man," in 1789, contained the very principle which was now carried out by force of arms by the General's successors and deadly enemies. "The Tricolor," he said, "will make the journey round the world." The time was now come when the Parisians hoped to unfold the banner of freedom simultaneously at the mouths of the Thames and the Danube, on the Ganges and the Missisippi. These plans remained indeed unexecuted for the moment, on account of their very comprehensiveness, and the haste with which they were formed. But they are so important and remarkable as characteristics of the French rulers at that period, and in their bearing on the subsequent course of the Revolution, that we cannot pass them by without closer examination.

Some of these schemes were immediately directed against

Eastern Europe, and had in view the overthrow of the Austrian State and the humiliation of Russia. We know that the French Minister reckoned, on the one hand, on a rising of the Turks, and on the other,—and this was by far the most important point—on the lulling of Prussia into inaction. King Frederick William had reached the Rhine on the 6th of November: some weeks then passed before any resolution was come to concerning further operations; but this delay was caused by military and not by political considerations. In the first place the troops greatly needed rest and refreshment, after the toils of their retreat from Champagne. Then again the leaders hesitated for a time in their choice of the next theatre of war. On the one side Hohenlohe-Kirchberg begged and prayed that they would not leave him to defend Trêves alone against the superior forces of the French; on the other, Custine's threatening attitude seemed to necessitate a movement towards the Main, for the purpose of protecting the rear of the army. The King decided at last for the latter operation, and the Prussian columns began their march from Coblentz, across the Lahn towards the Taunus mountains. The allies continued to proceed cautiously enough; and the Duke of Brunswick was now as little in favour of rapidity and boldness as he had been on the Marne. It was, therefore, during this march that the first notice was received of the new proposals of the French Ministry. Custine sent a message, on the 23rd, by the Landgrave of Hesse-Homburg, that if Prussia would acknowledge the French Republic, the latter would restore its conquests and set Louis XVI. and his family at liberty. Lucchesini immediately communicated it to Prince Reuss, and then returned to Coblentz to learn from Mandrillon, and the bookseller Mettra,—another agent of Lebrun,—further particulars respecting the views of the Parisian rulers. The latter had had a long conversation, the day before, with Duke Carl August of Saxe Weimar. In this, as in all the earlier negotiations, the irreconcilable

difference between the Prussian and French views, between a general and a separate peace, once more came to light. The course of the conference with Lucchesini was the same. The Marquis expressed his willingness to acknowledge the Republic, and to treat with it under the traditional diplomatic forms; but always on the supposition that a simultaneous understanding was to be entered into with Austria. When Mandrillon insisted rather warmly on the French side of the question, Lucchesini cried out at last; "Remember that the Powers are not brought so low as to allow laws to be prescribed to them." Mandrillon drew in his horns, whereupon Lucchesini informed him that the two German Monarchs had already named their representatives with a view to negotiations with France.[1] He then dwelt on the deep interest which the King felt in the safety of Holland and the House of Orange, and assured him that if these were threatened, not only would peace with Germany be impossible, but England would also immediately take part in the war against France. Finally, however, he urgently begged to be informed what powers the French Ministry would be intrusted with in the proposed negotiations, and desired that they should be expressly defined by the Convention.

Such a wish was natural enough under the circumstances, and only went to prove the sincerity of the peaceable intentions of Prussia. The French agents also regarded it as a symptom of a decided approximation to their views, and suddenly took an important step in advance, by offering Prussia not merely a peace, but an offensive alliance, with France. Lucchesini's letters contain no particulars of these proposals, but we are able to gather them directly, from Lebrun's instructions to his agents. "If Prussia," he begins, "insists on a general peace, the negotiation must be broken off, for under no circumstances will we ever come to terms with the Austrian Dynasty. Prussia's objections, to a se-

[1] He meant Thugut, Mercy &c.

parate peace are weak; for in fact it is not Prussia but Russia and Austria that would have cause to fear it. All that is requisite is to come to a decided resolution. Let Prussia secretly ally herself with us, and make her preparations for war during the winter, ostensibly against France. We have the means, in the meanwhile, of stirring up Hungary and Bohemia against Austria, and Poland and Turkey against Russia. Sweden is friendly to us, and Bavaria, being well aware of Austria's designs respecting her, will be easily gained over. At the beginning of spring we will all immediately and suddenly cross the borders of Austria at the same time, and with irresistible force. Austria will be dismembered, Poland will be free, Sweden will seize the Baltic provinces of Russia, and Prussia will gain by a single blow complete supremacy in Germany." "The French," he says in conclusion "demand nothing, and will take nothing, for themselves; nay they are ready to leave Holland untouched, provided the Prince of Orange manifests no hostility to the Republic on his side."

We shall not meet with many official documents which give us so clear an idea as the foregoing, of the character and sentiments of the French rulers at that period. It reveals a policy full of impetuosity and audacity, unbounded in its pretensions, and unscrupulous in its means. Unfortunately its boldness was founded not so much on a correct estimate of the task they were undertaking, and a clear conviction of ability to perform it, as on a passionate recklessness, which without calculating the consequences, involved their country in an endless series of perils. A little consideration must have convinced them that the King of Prussia was not to be allured to the French side by such vast and lawless dreams, for the realization of which so many circumstances would have to cooperate in a manner which could not reasonably be expected. The King abhorred the Revolution from the bottom of his heart; he was deeply engaged in his negotiations with Austria and Russia, and had

a strong regard for the forms of the Imperial constitution. And even supposing that all these difficulties could have been overcome, and the King had been entirely free to act according to the best interests of Prussia, he could hardly be expected to enter into a contest of life and death with the two Imperial Courts, the first result of which would be to strengthen his enemy Poland, and to further the interests of Sweden, which was entirely devoted to France. None of the advantages offered him could at all outweigh these perils; and the less so, because the principal datum on which the whole scheme was founded—the sincerity of France towards Prussia—proved on the first examination to be utterly worthless. While the French Statesmen allowed their armies to fall into decay to please the democrats at home, they endeavoured to make up for their military weakness by diplomatic intrigues in all parts of the world, and thereby came into no less violent collision with Prussia, Holland and England, than with Russia and Austria. They held out to Frederick William II. the hope of supremacy in Germany; but among themselves they expressed the joyful conviction, that even a friendly contact with France would suffice to undermine the Prussian throne.[1] They talked of the inviolability of Holland, while they were at the same time employed in organizing a revolutionary attack on Amsterdam. They wished to rouse the Osmans against Russia by means of their fleets, and did every thing in their power, by open hostility, to force England, the first naval power in the world, into an alliance with Catharine. Never perhaps was a world-embracing policy carried on in a more rash, perfidious and futile manner.

The King of Prussia, therefore, saw nothing in Mandrillon's communications to lead him to suspend for a moment his warlike preparations. His Ministers drily gave their opinion

[1] Custine wrote to Pache to this effect, on this occasion; and Desportes to the Committee of Public Safety, in May.

that Mandrillon's impudence formed a strong contrast with the apparent moderation of Custine's proposals, and that these negotiations ought once for all to be broken off. Meanwhile the army reached the positions of Custine in the Taunus mountains; but in consequence of the incorrigible sluggishness of the Duke, little ground was gained at first, in spite of some bloody engagements. Custine, however, completely lost his head at the very first collision; he sacrificed his garrison at Frankfort by contrary orders; and had his opponent shewn more energy, must have suffered very serious losses. The allies reached Frankfort on the 2nd of December with the Hessian battalions in the van, and prepared to storm the gates. Even here, at the very last moment, Brunswick's hesitating indecision had a most disastrous effect. He allowed the Hessians to stand inactive for a whole hour under a murderous fire, until a rising of the Frankfort workmen drove the French from one of the gates, whereupon the Hessians carrried the town without further trouble. Custine was soon afterwards obliged to evacuate the right bank of the Rhine as far as the outworks of Mayence. He excused himself in Paris by the treachery of the Frankfort people, and endeavoured to compensate for his misfortunes in the field by forcing the free State of Mayence to beg for incorporation into the French Empire. This was but a poor offset against the decided breaking off of negotiations with Prussia, in consequence of the capture of Frankfort. The wrath of the Parisians was all the greater, because at the same time the supplementary expedition against Treves entirely failed.[1] The Austrians, although greatly inferior in numbers, maintained their position on the heights of Pellingen; Beurnonville, who commanded in Kellermann's stead, complained that he could not call for greater exertions from his emaciated troops; and Dumouriez, to the great vexation of the Minister at War, was able to say with truth, that he

[1] Austrian Military Journal.

had foretold what would happen, and that every thing had proved the correctness of his prophecy.

And thus the new attempt to break up the alliance of the German Powers was frustrated still more quickly than the similar steps of Dumouriez and Westermann at Valmy. And what was still more important for the future, a decided move was at the same time made against the other half of the French intrigues; the Maritime Powers came forward in avowed opposition to the Revolution.

We have seen how emphatically the King of Prussia had laid down the inviolability of Holland as a condition of peace with France, and how readily Lebrun had acquiesced, on the understanding that the Prince of Orange would also remain quiet. As to Holland itself there could be no doubt of its desire of peace. This land had ceased to be a great Power; the people had gradually withdrawn their comfortable hands from the sword-hilt, and the Government had given up all attempt to influence the fate of the world. The Statesmen of the Hague expended all their force in the clumsy and complicated operations of their internal constitution; the population took but little interest in their dealings, which exclusively aimed, not at the extension, but the mere possession, of the very feeble powers of government. They carried on their trade with activity and honesty, cultivated their fields and meadows, ruled the money-market of Europe, and covered all seas with their commercial flag. A strict attention to religious forms pervaded all classes; the higher ranks manifested a taste for elegant learning and solid luxury; the houses of many an Amsterdam merchant outshone the palaces of princes in massive splendour; and in the Hague, certain gardens were to be seen separated from the street by solid silver railings. In their public life they still lived on the memory of a great past, and kept up the institutions and collections which they had inherited from their forefathers; but in their dealings with the present, they lacked that activity and liveliness which can only

spring from patriotism and public feeling. This was especially evident in regard to the very first condition of political independence, the capacity for self-defence. The navy, indeed, was as good as ever, but the army was in a deplorable condition. It consisted of a miserably fallen militia, some enlisted troops of the line without discipline or martial spirit, under aged and self-indulgent officers, and a few German regiments in the pay of the States-General, who were only bound to the performance of certain duties strictly defined in their contract. Under such circumstances the Government only desired peace and neutrality, and anxiously avoided everything which could draw on them the hostility of either party.

In France, on the other hand, several inducements combined to recommend to those in power an attack on Holland. The relations between Paris and Amsterdam were of very ancient standing, and to acquire a predominant influence over the States General had always been a darling wish of French diplomacy. That the Minister Brienne had quietly looked on at the victory of the Orange party in 1787 over the aristocracy—which was at the same time a defeat of French influence by that of England and Prussia—had inflicted one of its deepest wounds on the ancient Monarchy. Since that time, the Dutch patriots who had escaped to France had been petted and caressed by all the successive revolutionary parties—by Lafayette and Mirabeau, by Dumouriez and the Gironde. When therefore Lebrun's partisans took up arms against the Orange rule in Holland, it was only the renewal of the pursuit of an old French object, to which Dumouriez's position in Belgium naturally led. Then, again, this richest and weakest of all European States held out a stronger allurement to the greed of an invader than any other country. Cambon and Clavière cast longing looks at the bank of Amsterdam, by whose resources they hoped to cut off the supplies of money from the whole hostile Coalition. They knew very well that the wealthy population of that city

hated the French *Sansculottes* as heartily as the republican *assignats*, but from Cambon's point of view this was only another inducement to war. "As you have no Church lands wherewith to pay for your Revolution," said he on one occasion to the Dutch patriots Abbema and Staphorst, "your business is to overthrow the money-bags." Kersaint represented to the Convention that they had no reason to spare the Dutch merchants, because it was only the proletaries who could really be the friends of France, and these possessed no richly laden ships. In short the French Republic was urged to make war upon Holland by the diplomatic traditions of the *ancien régime*, and by the Girondist scheme of universal emancipation, as well as by the robber policy of the Mountain.

It needs no argument to shew that with such an adversary, Holland might by energy and determination have secured repose, or at any rate delay. But the Dutch Government, in the full consciousness of its incapacity to resist, only thought of ready compliance, by which the avarice of its enemies was continually increased. In Paris they first hit upon the idea of opening the navigation of the Scheldt to the sea, in spite of all the treaties by which the closing of that river was guaranteed to Holland for all time. The French Ministry desired to make use of the splendid port of Antwerp as a station for their fleet against England, whereby they also hoped to acquire especial popularity in Belgium, as a counterpoise to the influence of Dumouriez.[1] But before Lebrun proceeded to carry out this plan, he sounded the feelings of the Hague through the Ambassador De Maulde. Whereupon the Grand Pensionary Spiegel held out the prospect of a legal protest, but did not venture to mention the possibility of an armed resistance. This decided the question in Paris; on the 16th of November the French Ministry proclaimed the freedom of the Scheldt, caused a

[1] Morris.

French squadron to enter the harbour of Antwerp, and, encouraged by the timidity of the Dutch, sent an order to Dumouriez on the same day, to pursue the Austrians even into Holland itself in case they retreated thither. Happily for Holland this case did not occur; the Austrians retreated by way of Liege to the Rhenish provinces, and Dumouriez occupied the city, on the 27th, amidst the rejoicings of the very democratic population. Even the Ministry, which was at that time engaged in directing an attack upon Treves, Coblenz and Hesse, ordered him to move either upon Cologne or Luxembourg, to support Beurnonville and Custine. Meanwhile Dumouriez, who was thoroughly opposed to this whole system, embraced with joy a proposal of the Dutch demagogues, who promised to support him by a general revolt, if he would march his army across the frontier. It was indeed not difficult to shew the advantages of such a proceeding. After the decrees of the 16th and the 19th, Dumouriez could not doubt that his plan would be approved of in Paris, and he hastened to meet Pache's urgent orders to march upon the Rhine, by representing the alluring prospects held out to him in Holland.[1]

There was in fact but one serious obstacle in his path—the certainty, that an attack upon Amsterdam would necessarily lead to differences with Holland's nearest ally—the mighty England. It was a matter of course that England would not allow a French fleet to remain for any length of time at Antwerp, and that it was no more inclined now than in 1787, quietly to see the Orange rule in Holland threatened. Hitherto, however, Lebrun thought that he had special means of hindering a similar intervention; and these were no less than the kindling of a democratic revolution in London and

[1] The published correspondence between Pache and Dumouriez contains something to this effect, but Dumouriez has made prudent omissions. The letters in question are not to be found in the Military Archives, but all that is essential may be gathered from the Protocols of the Ministry.

Dublin, which was to be followed by a close alliance between the Republics of France, England and Ireland. Such a change would evidently be of far greater moment to France than the subversion of the Austrian throne; and the efforts made to bring it about were correspondingly greater and more persevering. Lebrun was zealously employed in gathering up all the threads of opposition and discontent which existed in the British Empire into his own hands, with the intention of overthrowing the existing constitution by a sudden move. The focus of these intrigues was the French Embassy in London itself. When England, after the 10th of August, withdrew her Ambassador from Paris—on the ground that he had only been accredited to the King—the French Ministry at first resolved only to maintain secret agents in London.[1] Pitt, however, plainly manifested his wish—notwithstanding the absence of a formal recognition of the Republic—to live in peace and amity with the French nation; and Chauvelin, therefore, received instructions to remain in London for the present as a private person. The leaders of the Parliamentary Opposition had for some time past openly frequented his house. He made himself the channel of a lively correspondence between Fox and Condorcet, and between Sheridan and Brissot; and it was more than once remarked that the speeches of Lords Lansdowne and Lauderdale agreed word for word with notes of Lebrun of the same date.[2] These grandees had no desire of either introducing the Social Republic into England, or of making her a French province; but they did not disdain to parade a leaning towards France, and to use it as a weapon of political offence, in their opposition to the Ministry. Lebrun made use of them with silent contempt,[3] and rejoiced in having far more energetic allies. There existed in London

[1] Protocol of the 24th of August. — [2] Malmesbury's *Diaries*, Dec. 1792. — [3] Kersaint speaks publicly of Fox in this tone in the Convention on the 3d of January.

a number of democratic clubs with numerous branches in the larger provincial towns. These occupied public attention with a noisy agitation for Parliamentary reform and universal suffrage, and had gained a large number of adherents among the populace, and a certain amount of consideration with the liberal portion of the middle classes. The latter, of course, were not allowed to know what was going on behind the scenes—that the leaders of the clubs were in constant correspondence with the French Government, to whom they avowed in so many words their design of establishing an English Republic. While petitions in favour of a Reform-bill were exposed for signature at all the public places in London, and stormy meetings demanded that the constitution should be strengthened and consolidated by liberal progress, Lebrun's agents were laying plans for an armed revolt. They supplied muskets, powder and money, and recruited a number of vagabonds for an attack on the Tower, which was to furnish the democrats with weapons, and thereby put them in possession of the capital. These agents were mostly old associates or new friends of Danton—second-rate Diplomatists such as Benoit and Noel—*protegés* of Lebrun, as the American Serre and the Irishman Ferris—and Clavière's old coadjutor the Genevese Duroverai. The reports of these people[1] reveal, as usual, an abundance of quarrelling and wrangling in their own camp; but as the autumn advanced, their confidence in the success of their great plot increased. At the beginning of November, Lebrun was convinced that it only needed an energetic effort on the part of the French to bring about an outbreak in London, and to place the government in the hands of an English National Convention. The last link in this chain of revolutionary operations was Ireland, which was at this time the theatre of a double political agitation—the one, a legal one

[1] In the papers of the Committee of Public Safety, and the Protocols of the Ministerial Council.

among the Catholics, in favour of Reform—the other, of a revolutionary character, carried on by the Protestant Dissenters, whose object was to separate the country from England. The latter, animated by puritanical hatred against Royalty and the Established Church, were in close connexion with the most radical of the English Clubs, and kept up an uninterrupted correspondence with Paris, from which they weekly received assurances of powerful support. In accordance with these promises, France had, since September, 21 ships of the line at sea, 7 on the stocks, 30 frigates under sail, and 23 ready to take in their guns and stores; and it was incessantly repeated that England had only 16,000 sailors and marines in her service, and had therefore hardly the complements of 12 ships of the line at her disposal. Incredible sums of money were sent across the Channel—at least 30 million francs by the end of the year—all, of course, in *assignats*, which in England were cashed at about half their nominal value. The French press too, of all colours, did their utmost to inspire the two nations with enthusiasm for the great work of revolution.[1]

Pitt had hitherto adhered with unwavering firmness to the policy of neutrality and peace.[2] He repudiated, of course,

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[1] For all these facts consult the work of Herbert Marsh (Historical review of the policy of England and France from the treaty of Pilnitz to the declaration of War), which is entirely based on documents. Lord Stanhope, in his Life of Pitt, furnishes no new matter. The "Auckland papers" (*Vid.* II. 472, 481) confirm the statements of Marsh and Stanhope. — [2] At the present day it is hardly necessary to bring forward special proofs of this view of the case, which was once so violently disputed. All the official documents, correspondence, and despatches, of the Powers and Statesmen concerned, go to prove its correctness, while his opponents have not the least shadow of testimony to bring forward. In July 1792 the English Ministers directed their Ambassador at the Hague strongly to oppose the accession of Holland to the Coalition (Correspondence of Lord Auckland, II, 419). They were indignant with Prussia on account of her Polish policy (*ibid.* 423). In September the Government declined to express its wishes respecting France, on account

the principles of the Revolution but he had no thought of active interference. Burke, who interested himself with zeal and judgment in the Emigrés, was very much distressed by the shortsighted dullness of the Ministers; and in the autumn of 1792, he told his son that he apprehended an alliance between England and the Revolution. The invitation sent to England from Champagne by Prussia, to cooperate with her, had no better fate; and it was equally in vain that the Chancellor in St. Petersburg endeavoured with indefatigable eloquence to convince the English Ambassador of the world-destroying character of the Revolution. Pitt's resolution remained unshaken. It is not true—often as it was asserted under Robespierre and Napoleon—that Pitt rejoiced at the material disorders of France, and especially the ruin of her commerce and its colonies, as being dangerous competitors of England. The figures before him proved too clearly the importance of the English export trade to France, especially since 1787. The impoverishment of France would inflict a greater loss on English commerce than could be compensated by any advantage which the revolt of St. Domingo might bring to the English sugar islands. Thus Noel reported to Danton, on the 4th of October, that Pitt was on the point of empowering Grenville to carry on an official negotiation, which might perhaps lead to the recognition of the Republic, and the mediation of England in the war with Germany. Noel, it is true, was urgent for further instructions; and the English Ministers, he said, hearing nothing more from Paris, would begin to believe in intentional deception. We know, however, that very different instructions were soon afterwards sent over the Channel, and that the English Ministers were gradually forced to the conviction of the aggressive spirit of the Revolution. As late as the

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of England's neutrality; it confined itself to the general wish that France should not carry on a war of conquest, and should escape from its existing anarchy. *Ibid.* 443.

6th of November, Lord Granville had communicated at great length to Lord Auckland, the English Ambassador at the Hague, the decided opinion of the Ministry, that the interests of England and Holland demanded the maintenance of neutrality, even though such a course should call for an unusual exercise of patience and long suffering. On the 13th of November, however, the Dutch Ambassador, Van Nagel, went to Pitt to describe the danger of his country, and to receive assurances of England's help in case of need. The Minister returned a definite answer, which he also commissioned Lord Auckland to repeat, on the 16th, at the Hague. Yet Holland's best protection still seemed to him to lie in the restoration of a general peace; and on the same day, therefore, he despatched an Envoy to the German Powers to ask on what conditions they would consent to a peace with France; and at the same time expressed the wish of England to mediate between the parties.[1] He did not however succeed in making a favourable impression either on Prussia or Austria. These two Powers were, for the moment, thinking more of their intended acquisitions than of peace, and England shewed no approbation either of the partition of Poland or the Bavarian exchange. Both Courts, therefore, avoided giving any definite answer to the English note. Meanwhile the offensive measures of the French followed one another in close succession; first, the violent opening of the Scheldt—then, the warm commendation of the English radicals in the Convention—the decree of the 19th of November—and the intrigues of the French agents in England itself. The eyes of Pitt were slowly and reluctantly opened to the change which had taken place in the position of affairs. He had hitherto placed his pride in

[1] Haeften to the States-General of Holland, Jan. 9th. Stratton to Grenville, Jan. 20. 1893. Lucchesini to the Ministry, 23. Nov. 1892.—*Conf.* Pitt's letter to his colleague, the Marquis of Stafford, Nov. 13, in Stanhope's Life of Pitt, II. 173.

peace, in the well-being and freedom of England: he had covered the deficit, introduced a scheme for the payment of the National debt, and reduced the army and navy. He had made preparations for the extension of political rights in all directions; he had actively promoted the reform of the electoral law, the security of the freedom of the press, and the political power of the middle classes. He had likewise shown an active sympathy in the fate of the Irish people, and the abolition of the slave trade. All these plans, however—the completion of which was to bring the epoch of 1688 to a close, and open a new era for England—all these hopes, were nipped in the bud by the approach of the Revolution. The war hindered all financial progress, and in the presence of anarchical communism, no change in the existing laws could be hazarded. The machinations of the Jacobins, which favoured the Russian lust of conquest in the East of Europe, retarded the political progress of England in the West, for a whole generation. Pitt was well aware of this, and took leave with pain of the objects of his previous policy. He had the proofs of the plot for seizing the Tower, and information concerning all the leaders and the main features of the revolutionary scheme, in his own hands.[1] No choice was left him; he was obliged to think of the safety of his country; but even then he never went beyond what was absolutely necessary, and eagerly caught at every chance of peace. The man, whom a narrow party spirit has been accustomed to regard as the originator of all the coalitions against France, was incessantly using his influence with the Powers to bring the contest to an end.

On the 1st of December, a secretly prepared royal proclamation was made in London, by which a portion of the

[1] Herbert Marsh asserts this with exact details, but has not gained much credit, because, just in this case, he does not give his authority. But the fact is fully confirmed by the Dutch despatches, both those of the Grand Pensionary Spiegel, and of Hogguer, Ambassador in St. Petersburg.

militia was called to arms, and the House of Commons, which had been lately adjourned, was summoned to meet on the 13th. The interval before the opening of the Session was employed in strengthening the Government both in Parliament and in public opinion. We must here call to mind the origin of the opposition which was then made to the ministry of Pitt. The Whigs of the former century consisted of a group of noble families, which for a long time struggled with the monarchical system of George III. for the possession of supreme power. After many changes of fortune, they succumbed to the genius of Pitt, who drew the monied power, and the higher middle classes, into an alliance with the crown against the influence of the great Whig families. When, therefore, the French Revolution filled the world with the noisy tumult of democracy, the Whig party was split up into several divisions; in one of which aristocratic tendencies, and hostility to French principles, preponderated, and in the other, feelings of political opposition, and hatred towards the existing Ministry. There were now three sections in the opposition—one entirely aristocratic and conservative, led by Burke and inclining towards the Ministry, which, however, they regarded as influenced more by love of rule than steady principle; another under the nominal leadership of the good-humoured, but feeble, Duke of Portland, but really led by Fox—aristocratic in its composition, but liberal in its tendencies—the real reformers of that period—who, though actuated by true English feeling, were inclined to the French alliance; and a third, decidedly republican, connected with the Clubs and the Irish—weak in Parliament, but dangerous to the Government, as connecting link between Fox and the Clubs. In the question which now occupied the whole political arena, Pitt could count almost too certainly on the first of these sections, to which he himself appeared too lukewarm in his hostility towards France. The third must be crushed, and the second either won over or broken up. An attempt was

made to bring Portland and a few of his friends into the Ministry, but it was frustrated by the influence of Fox over the feeble Duke. Pitt was, however, more than compensated for this failure by his success beyond the walls of Parliament. The tyranny of the French mob had produced its effect, even on the other side of the Channel. The Commonalty (Tiers Etat) of England were enthusiastic for the oath of the Tennis-Court and the storming of the Bastille; but the 10th of August rather staggered them, and the massacres of September filled them with horror and disgust. They now called to mind all that they owed to the British Constitution, and especially to the Ministry of Pitt. The militia flocked in great numbers to the *rendezvous*, loyal associations were formed in opposition to the revolutionary clubs, and the press was almost unanimous in supporting the existing state of things. It was one of those occasions on which the whole weight of the nation in England is brought to bear on political questions, and drives all the factions before it with irresistible force. On the 13th of Dec., when the debate was opened in the Lower House, the Opposition was withered by this change in the political atmosphere. Its leaders were not even inclined to venture on a division; but Fox declared with an oath that he would appeal to the House, and learned from the result that only the republicans, and a few evidently reluctant partisans of his own—50 out of 340—were on his side.

The victory of the Ministry was so complete and splendid, that its opponents turned its very success into a reproach. "Where," they asked, "is the danger, on account of which this extraordinary manifestation has been got up? Where are the powers of the insurrection, which are to be combated at the sacrifice of England's liberties and the friendship of France?" These observations would, no doubt, have been well founded, if the Government had only had to do with the radicals at home; but, under the circumstances, they were altogether disingenuous, since no one was ignorant that the

real source of danger was the aggressive spirit of the French. The nation was perfectly clear on this point, as Fox was taught, when, on the 15th of December, he moved that England should recognise the French Republic, and accredit an Ambassador to Paris. This time no division was come to in the House, and outside its walls nothing but curses were heard against the late idol of the English populace.

Pitt, however, by no means abused his newly acquired power. He contented himself with the most necessary measures of defence. In order to thwart the intrigues of French agents he asked for powers to establish an efficient police for the *surveillance* of foreigners; to cut off the material resources of the insurrection, he demanded a law prohibiting the introduction of French paper money, and the exportation of corn to French harbours. He further proposed to raise the armed forces of the Kingdom to 27,000 sailors and 17,000 soldiers—the insignificant amount of which afford the very strongest proof of the pacific sentiments of the Ministry.

Several weeks elapsed before these bills had gone through the necessary forms in Parliament; but from the moment when they were brought forward, no one could doubt of their being carried. England, rising from deep repose, stood before Europe, not armed as yet, and still ready to welcome peace, but firmly resolved not to brook the slightest violation of her own independence, or the security of her allies. The impression made in Paris was immediate and powerful; the feeling pervaded the French people that they had found in England an adversary which would oppose to the volcanic fire of the Revolution, the calm and stubborn resistance of the rock.

The French Ministry received the first positive tidings of the change of affairs in England as early as the 5th Dec., immediately after the royal proclamation, and almost in the same hour as the disastrous intelligence from Frankfort. Dumouriez's proposition concerning the Dutch war was at

this moment under consideration; the result of which was not for a moment doubtful. Since the French Cabinet wished, as regards England, to watch the progress of affairs, and to act with double vigour on the Rhine, Dumouriez was informed that the Ministers by no means rejected his scheme against Holland, but considered it of more urgent importance, at the present moment, to adhere to the previous plan of operation, and drive the Austrians across the Rhine.[1] They were the more rejoiced at this resolution when, on the 7th of Dec., another despatch arrived from Chauvelin, in which he made a report of a conversation he had held with Fox and Sheridan. The nature of their communications may be gathered from the fact, that the French Ministry immediately held a fresh consultation on the Dutch enterprise, the result of which was a despatch to Chauvelin, to the effect that the whole scheme was entirely abandoned.

Dumouriez received this new order with transports of fury. Pache had only spoken of his supporting Custine, and of a possible attack on Luxembourg, and had alluded to, but not fully imparted, other diplomatic reasons;—all which was calculated to wound the sensitive pride of the General. He immediately replied that since Pache had ruined his army, he could no longer pursue the Austrians, to whom the Prussians, irritated by Custine's adventure, had sent fresh aid; and that he therefore protested against the resolution of the Ministers, as entirely chimerical. The latter were quite inclined to bring the self-willed General before a court-martial; but the angry reply was immediately followed by Dumouriez's confidential adjutant Thouvenot, who, after two exhaustive discussions with the Minister, succeeded for the moment in effecting a compromise. Thouvenot gave up the attack on Holland, and explained that his General had only declined at the present moment to march on Co-

[1] Protocols of the Ministerial Council in the Imperial Archives at Paris. Pache to Dumouriez, Dec. 6th.

logne, on account of the impossibility of provisioning his army. The Ministers in return gave up the idea of holding a court-martial, and resolved that both Dumouriez and Beurnonville should enter into winter quarters. But the Parisian party was already so confident of its own strength, that, in the face of this ministerial resolution, Pache announced to the General that the Council insisted on the occupation of the Rhine: whereupon Dumouriez, who, in spite of his exasperation, was bound to obey, sent on his van-guard to Aix-la-Chapelle, but halted there on receiving the intelligence that Beurnonville was in full retreat. This time Pache did not venture to repeat the violation of the decree, and a complete cessation of arms took place from Antwerp to Basle. The universal revolutionary propaganda paused for a moment in its headlong course.

But if any one founded thereon a hope of seeing the zeal of the Revolution flag, he was destined to be bitterly disappointed. The Republic had entered too far into the path of violence. The only effect of the failure of the plan of fraternizing with the peoples, was to direct the fury of the Revolution against the peoples as well as their rulers, and to substitute for the Girondists' smile of freedom, the plundering schemes of Danton. The French Ministers even regarded it as a compensation for the overthrow of their plans, that they were no longer checked in the open display of their rapacity, by any consideration for the fraternal union of all nations which they had hitherto so loudly preached. If the peoples in their blindness took offence at the punishment of a despot, so much the better for the Revolution, which did not increase its dangers, by increasing the number of its enemies, but only its booty and glory. If they rejected the brotherly hand which was held out to them, let them feel the wrath of offended Liberty, and let their goods be employed in feeding their conquerors. They had reasons enough in Paris to be satisfied with such a turn of affairs. The month of November produced only 28 millions of revenue

against 138 millions outlay, 122 of which were spent in the war. Clavière considered that this was of itself sufficient to render it impossible any longer to keep up the pretence of unselfish brotherhood in foreign countries; and Cambon frankly told the Belgian patriots, that France needed their Church property to keep up the value of the *assignats;* and that, consequently, Belgium must become a French province. They therefore contracted the Propaganda's sphere of operations, in order to carry out their schemes of conquest more completely, within narrower limits.

These new views were soon officially expressed. On the 15th of December—two days after the opening of the English Parliament, and the decree of the French Council respecting the winter quarters of the army—Cambon proposed to the Convention, that the neighbouring countries, whom they had hitherto invited to freedom and self-government, should henceforward be made to bear the rule of the *sansculottes* and the cost of the *assignats.* "The object of the war," he said, "is destruction to the palace, and peace to the cottage; hitherto our troops have expelled the tyrants, but class privileges still exist; if any nation wishes to deserve liberty and our friendship, it must do what we have done; it must overthrow the privileged classes and give the *sansculottes* a share in the government. You cannot allow any half-measures; a people which does not choose to be entirely free, is your enemy; wherever we appear, we must constitute ourselves as a revolutionary power. The property of our enemies" he continued "—*i. e.* of all tyrants, churches, noblemen, corporations and rich egoists—should be seized as a pledge for the future liquidation of the expenses of war. We shall relieve the poor by the abolition of all taxes, and supply the deficiency thus caused from our own treasury, by means of our *assignats,* which will gain a fresh security in the sequestrated property. Their circulation in the districts occupied by us will be in this manner secured, and we shall be spared the costly purchase of silver money for our armies."

These propositions were loudly cheered by the Convention. Robespierre and his party, who took little part in warlike matters, remained passive, or were rather perhaps inclined to disapprove. Danton's associates warned the Convention against the alienation of the neighbouring peoples, which might be the consequence of this decree; but they too were fated to see themselves outstripped by their own disciples, and the great mass of the ministerialists with noisy impatience decreed as follows.

"Wherever the French armies shall come, all taxes, tithes, and privileges of rank, are to be abolished; all existing Authorities annulled, and provisional Administrators elected by universal suffrage; the property of the fallen Government, of the privileged classes and their adherents, is to be placed under French protection; and, lastly, Conventional Commissioners are to be sent into the country to fraternize with the people; and Commissioners from the Government, to provide for the maintenance of French troops."

This decree needs no comment. Wherever it was executed, it subjected the occupied country at a single blow to the dominion of Paris; it overturned all the internal relations of life, confiscated the property of the richer classes, and robbed even the poor by the ever-increasing depreciation of the *assignats*. It was answered therefore from all sides by a cry of horror and disgust. The Belgian provinces sent up an energetic protest, the Dutch patriots were reduced to silence, and among the Germans and the English the last remnant of that sympathy vanished, which the remembrance of the spring of 1789 had awakened, and which had partially survived the September massacres. By this decree, France gave up her attempt to seduce the nations by a shadowy image of liberty; not however with the intention of returning to the paths of peace and international law, but of declaring open war on the whole system of social order, in the name of mob rule.

CHAPTER IV.

TRIAL OF LOUIS XVI.

Competence of the convention.—Review of the efforts to revolutionize foreign countries.—Private papers of the king.—Ferment in Paris.—Communistic proposals.—Their rejection.—Commencement of the trial.—Change in the views of the Gironde consequent on England's preparations for war.—Plan of appealing to the nation.—Examination and defence of Louis.—Debate on the sentence.—Predominance of the Gironde.—Threatening attitude of the democrats.—Agitation of the lower classes in Paris.—Desertion of the troops to the democrats.—Sentence of death against Louis extorted by fear.—Execution of the king.

In undertaking to relate the last days and sufferings of King Louis XVI., we feel that we are still more exposed, than in other portions of our history, to the objection, that after the countless recitals that have been given of them, it is impossible to furnish any thing worthy the attention of the reader. In respect to certain phases of the events to be described, we are deeply convinced of the force of the objection; and shall therefore speak of these only so far as is absolutely necessary to preserve the connexion of our story. To this category belongs more especially the pourtrayal of the personal sufferings, of which the dungeons of the Temple were the scene in those horrible days—the series of brutalities which were heaped upon the heads of the Royal Family[1]—the cruelties which each of the persecuted ones experienced in his own person, and—far worse—was obliged to see inflicted on the nearest to his heart. We may further omit to speak of those parliamentary contests in which each party endeavoured to obtain for their actions, not the meed of success—for this depended upon quite dif-

[1] *Conf.* the Journals of the Princess Maria Theresa and Cléry.

ferent things—but the assent and approbation of their contemporaries and their posterity. And, lastly, we may pass over a number of subordinate intrigues, which, though of little importance, have nevertheless claimed a large share of curiosity and interest. We have no intention of adorning or encumbering our story with any of these things; remembering that the catastrophe offers other, less known but not less essential points, the clearer understanding of which may, perhaps for the first time, enable us to pronounce an historical and moral judgment. For it was not the intrigues of impotent compassion, nor the speeches of criminal judges, nor the sufferings of the victims, which determined the issue of this great contest; and it will be our task, as far as our sources allow, to point out and establish the true causes and the essential character of the events which followed. If therefore our recital cannot hope to affect, excite and agitate, the reader, like those of many of our predecessors, yet we trust that the tragic lessons, which the event in its purely historical nature is calculated to teach, will not be altogether lost.

After Valazé, a zealous Girondist, had prepared the Convention on the 3rd of November, by a brutal and turgid description of all the crimes of the King, Mailhe, a member of the Centre, proceeded, on the 7th, to ventilate the legal question, whether a criminal procedure against Louis could be lawfully commenced, and what tribunal was competent to try him. There was reason enough for such a preliminary question, even for those who regarded the sanctity of ancient royalty as obsolete, and wished to treat Louis solely according to the usual principles of the criminal law. They were prevented from founding their charges against him on earlier occurrences, by the general amnesty with which the Constituent Assembly had concluded its labours in September 1791. For the following period, of course, the standard of law was to be sought in the Constitution, which plainly declared the person of the King inviolable, since it held the Ministry responsible for all the acts of the Government.

There was, however, one exception to this rule; if the King should lead a foreign army against France, or not formally oppose such an undertaking, he was to be considered as having abdicated. From this proviso two deductions might be made; that for this crime no greater punishment was to be inflicted than the one specified, and that every other act, even though performed behind the back of the Ministers, was sheltered by the royal inviolability. Now it was just this crime of treason against the country—conspiracy with Austria and Europe for the overthrow of French liberty—of which he was accused by Valazé. But even supposing the charge were well founded—that his whole existence in the year 1792 had not been what it was, a feeble attempt to defend himself against the Republicans—the penalty of deposition had already been inflicted on the 10th of August, and there was no ground at all for further proceedings against Louis.

All this was so clear and unequivocal that Mailhe, without any attempt at refutation, confessed that according to the laws of 1791, the whole matter was concluded by the abdication. The first step of this criminal tribunal was to abandon the ground of legality, and substitute for it the two fulcra of all despots—the law of State necessity, and the omnipotence of the Sovereign power. "You represent," cried Mailhe, "the sovereignty of the nation; this sovereignty is inalienable and indivisible, and cannot therefore be limited by the inviolability of the King; this inviolability would be a sufficient plea as against all other authorities, but it is impotent as against the nation. Now the nation demands vengeance, and the punishment of the traitor, by the law of nature—by the same law according to which I should stab the murderer of my wife."

This view of the matter had important practical consequences. As the nation alone could reach Louis, its representatives, —*i. e.* the Convention,—were the only possible tribunal. As the Convention wielded the omnipotence of

the sovereign people, it needed not to be bound by the usual forms of criminal law. And lastly, as the Convention was in every sense the Plenipotentiary of the nation, its verdict needed no further sanction on the part of the sovereign people itself.

As a great portion of the independent members sided with Danton, in wishing to lay the matter ultimately before the great body of the primary Electors, we must look for the reason of the last of these propositions in some immediate purpose of the Ministers. This purpose will be easily recognized, when we recollect that in the then existing balance of parties, the Ministry could command a majority in the Convention at any moment, by means of its partisans; and that just at this time it wished to make the trial of the King subservient to its diplomatic aims. We see, therefore, that it was for the interest of the Ministry to secure to the Convention, the entire and unconditional disposal of the fate of Louis. Mailhe's report clearly shows how strongly his regards were fixed upon foreign countries. He speaks of Spain and Hungary, which, he hoped, would soon follow the example of France; he concluded with the declaration, that the tottering of all thrones, the progress of the French arms, the electric shock running through every heart,—proclaimed to mankind the approaching overthrow of all Monarchs. On the motion of Billaud, the Convention decreed the translation of the report into every European language.

By the adoption of this report, the Convention would declare Louis to be a person devoid of all rights, whom they might use at their pleasure,—according to the political requirements of the moment, as booty—hostage or sacrifice. For the present they had only discussed the preliminary question, between the inviolability of the King and the omnipotence of the Convention. But passion quickly broke through all forms, and the Convention was soon obliged formally to allow the speakers to deliberate on every bearing

of the question—the competence of the tribunal, the forms of procedure, the guilt, and the degree of punishment. On this occasion, the critical position of affairs, the venom of party feuds, and above all the terror which—in spite of the reaction in the Conventional elections since the September massacres —the democratic party still continued to diffuse, were clearly seen. It was this terror which inspired the tone, though not yet the matter, of the debate. The Members vied with one another in oratorical efforts to heap abuse upon the head of Louis; and even those who endeavoured to save him from the axe, considered themselves bound to trample on the crown. Mutual suspicions too came into play: the Jacobins suspected that the Gironde were aiming at the restoration of Louis; the Gironde were deliberating whether the Mountain desired the execution of Louis in order to place Orleans on the throne: and thus the bitterness of party feeling increased from day to day and led to furious quarrels, during which fists were sometimes clenched, and sticks and rapiers raised. The main question was for a long time undecided. Some voices indeed were raised amid the tumult which indignantly denied the omnipotence of the Convention, and wished, in the absence of all criminal law, at least to save the name of judge from desecration, and openly to justify the decree on the grounds of the national weal. It was Morisson, Fauchet, and above all Lanjuinais, who thus resisted all threats and prudential motives with courageous firmness. Louder and louder rose the complaints of the Mountain, that the Convention, after having proclaimed its own omnipotence, did not proceed forthwith to use it for the destruction of the Tyrant, but wasted its time in hypocritical and liberty-destroying forms. St. Just was the first to raise this cry, and thereby gained an important position in his party. He, too, like Morisson, declared that they had no right to *try* the King, from which, however, he drew the conclusion that Louis ought to be poignarded as an enemy and a prisoner of war; because the crime of having been a King

was sufficient to make him an outlaw. St. Just, accordingly, spared himself the trouble of looking for further proofs of Louis's guilt; and even the rest of the members said but little on this point, since the real incentive of all was not right but expediency and advantage. For in the midst of all this fierce excitement, the secret calculations might be discerned—of the one party, to drown their domestic enemies in Louis's blood, and of the other, to complete the European Revolution by the ill-treatment of the King. From the Centre of the Assembly, especially, resounded the warlike tirades against Europe. "An impulse," cried Grégoire, "has been given to the World, the nations are eager for liberty; the volcano will break forth, and impart a new form to the globe; but if you should let Louis go unpunished, Europe would be at fault, and the despots would immediately turn the unfavourable impression thus made to their own purposes." "You see," argued Thomas Payne, "that the crowned robbers of Europe have conspired against freedom; you have caught one of the band, and you will not let him go, until you have discovered the full extent of their abominable machinations." This theme was harped upon with endless and yet monotonous variations; for weeks the turbid stream of invectives rolled on without a single fact being proved, or the business in hand advanced by a single step.

In the midst of these outpourings of an only half-genuine fanaticism, the Minister Roland came forward on the 20th to make an unexpected announcement. He had been informed, he said, that Louis had possessed an iron safe built into the wall of a room in the Tuileries, for the preservation of important documents; he had thereupon looked for and discovered the safe, and found the papers; in which, as he had observed on a hasty perusal, the names of several Deputies occurred; and he now laid them before the Convention for their inspection, as they would doubtless prove important to the trial.

We may here observe that Roland was subsequently

charged by the Jacobins with having sifted the papers before making his report, because several Girondists were compromised by them; nay, that he had made Louis himself give information of what soon turned out to be a very insignificant discovery, in order to delay the trial. The Minister, in reply to this accusation, declared (in contradiction to what he had said in the first instance), that he had not read the papers at all, but had immediately ordered them to be carried into the Convention. Louis, on his part, not only denied the existence of the iron safe, but did not even acknowledge the papers, which were laid before him, although they all dated from the period of the Constituent Assembly, and were therefore anterior to the acceptance of the Constitution and the publication of the general amnesty. What still further increased the uncertainty which rests on this subject is, that the Commissioners of the Convention made no further search into the safe; and, on the publication of the documents, declared that there were several of them which they did not consider it necessary to print, but had, in their stead, incorporated with the collection a series of other important papers. The documents of the iron safe, therefore, are in every way devoid of credibility; but the Convention, inaccessible to scruples of that kind, adopted them as evidence, caused a number of carefully chosen and skilfully arranged papers to be printed, and thereby confirmed a belief among the lower classes in Paris of Louis's treachery. The ferment in the public mind was greatly increased, and it was even then a matter of doubt, whether the Government could control the issue of the trial. The Jacobins pursued their object with redoubled zeal, and though the investigation of those papers delayed the proceedings for many weeks, yet the victory of the democrats in Paris was already so undoubted, that they could once more venture to raise again the banner of their September domination, in one of the most important departments of the National life. They seized on the social question, and with the same declaration of the omnipotence

of the State, which hung like the sword of Damocles above the head of Louis, they now began to threaten the property of every proprietor in France.

The evil tidings from Lyons had induced the Convention, as early as the end of October, to institute a comprehensive inquiry into the sources of the supply of provisions. On the 3rd of November, Fabre of Montpellier brought up a report in the name of the Committees on Trade and Agriculture. He laid great stress on the important fact that there was sufficient corn in existence, and that the dearth was entirely caused by a cessation of traffic. In examining into the cause of this evil, he never thought of the general legal insecurity which prevailed, but imputed the mischief to two great conspiracies—of the enemies of freedom, who wished to starve the people—and of the usurers, who sucked their blood. He then proceeded to move that these disturbers of the public weal should be subjected to an increase of restraint and pressure, and that every citizen should be compelled, on the severest penalties, to give information of the amount of his stock and offer it for sale, according to the requirements of the people. There was but one step between this last provision and the declaration of the sovereign people's right to impose a fixed price on the goods of the seller, by which all property whatever would be placed at their disposal.

The debate on these propositions was carried on with the same violence as that on the fate of Louis XVI., and was rendered the hotter, by the increasingly threatening character of the intelligence from the Departments, where the plundering bands,—chiefly composed of the poorest peasants—continually increased in numbers and turbulence. The Financial Committee, hard pressed by Clavière, now at his wits' end, resolved to withdraw their salaries from the Catholic Clergy, and thus to spare the State an annual sum of 70 millions. Whoever wished for a priest, said Cambon, on the 13th, might keep him out of his own pocket. This was a fatal

step; for it at once threw the Constitutional clergy into a hostile attitude towards the revolutionary government. Grey-headed parish priests were now to be seen, side by side with the bandits of September, at the head of rebellious mobs; the dagger and the cross cooperated against the Authorities and the possessors of property. A fixed price was put upon articles of all sorts at Chartres, Courville, Blois, Beaugency and Orleans; corn, wheat, butter and eggs, were taken from the owners at a mere nominal price, and if they resisted, they were openly plundered and threatened with death. The general cry of the mobs was for a division of land, or a reduction of rent; and the Government Commissioners, who were without means of enforcing their authority, or themselves held Jacobin opinions, nowhere upheld the law. The September party, animated by this intelligence, and ensured of an increasing excitement in Paris by the trial of the King, now came openly forward with their communistic programme. Beffroi represented to the Convention that the necessaries of life were not objects of private property, and that the first duty of the State was to overthrow the tyranny of the capitalists, which, he said, weighed more heavily on the poor than the former domination of the noble lords of the soil. Above all, the orator declaimed against the fact—intelligible to us, but in his eyes only to be explained by a wide conspiracy—that the sale of the Church lands had not increased the number of small proprietors, but only the great landed properties of the country. He called upon the Convention to check this growing evil by the severest repressive measures; and especially to forbid the union of several farms—to annul all existing contracts of this kind—and to limit the trade in corn exclusively to those markets which were under the inspection of the State. These views were expressed in an exaggerated form, on the 19th of November, in an address from the Electors of Seine-et-Oise, who demanded: that every peasant should be compelled to bring a fixed quota of his crop to market, at the price

fixed by the State; and that no peasant should possess more than a certain number of fields, or employ more than a certain number of day labourers.[1] A week later the Commune of Paris raised its dreaded voice to utter similar sentiments; complained of the union of capitalists, who were endeavouring to suppress the Revolution by buying up provisions and starving the people; and called for measures to annihilate usury, and to empower the Authorities to fix the price of the necessaries of life.

If we consider these demands in their connexion with one another, we shall have before us the very main spring of the terrorist policy. They are the very same which formed the objects of the short democratic rule in September; the same which had furnished matter of controversy between the Parisian party and their opponents for three years; the same which henceforward furnished the watchword for every fresh revolutionary *coup d'état*.

The moment of victory, however, was not yet come. So sharp a reminder of the days of September aroused all opponents of Communism to unanimous resistance. The Gironde, whose leaders now came forward to plead the cause of personal freedom, and the sacredness of private property, found themselves supported by a large number of independent members. Barère, whose only wisdom consisted in an instinctive sense of the seat of power for the time being, caused a decree to be passed, on the 26th, by which the Government Commissioners were re-called, and re-placed by envoys of the Convention. Feraud, Lidon Lequinio and Barbaroux, contended with warmth for unconditional freedom of traffic, and unreservedly exposed the real source of the evil. Even St. Just, intimately connected as he was with Robespierre, gave them

[1] All this is omitted in the extracts from the debate given by Buchez and Roux, whose work, though indispensable as containing much information not published elsewhere, is not in any part sufficient for a thorough study of the Revolution, because the selection of matter is almost entirely guided by certain political predilections.

his support on this occasion, and with great correctness of judgment called for a diminution of the mass of *assignats*, as the first step towards a remedy. Robespierre, cautious as usual, contented himself with branding the unworthiness of the capitalists, deploring the difficulty of controlling them, and recommending for the present the acceptance of the Committee's propositions. He, too, clearly perceived that the prevailing feeling of the Convention was decidedly against them. He therefore sought with redoubled zeal to make the existing excitement subservient to his other objects. When the Commissioners who had been sent to Chartres returned on the 28th, and gave a deplorable account of the state of things in that city; when they told of threats and acts of violence, employed even against themselves by an insurgent mob; when they mentioned a priest as having made himself particularly remarkable amongst the instigators; Robespierre rose with eager zeal to direct the wrath of the Assembly against the clergy, and thereby to throw the guilt of the disturbances on the counter-revolution. "There is no other means of restoring order," he cried, "than the execution of the King; by that and that alone can you crush the head of the serpent." Danton and Marat expressed their emphatic assent, and when Buzot objected that it was not a question of the King, but of respect for the law, Legendre rejoined, "The author of the famine is a prisoner in the Temple." At the same time handbills were distributed before the doors of the Convention, calling on the people to behead Louis and the "Austrian woman," if they wanted bread;[1] and the Convention agreed to Legendre's motion to close the general discussion on the trial of the King, and to print the speeches which were still in arrear. The lingering remnant of hesitation on the part of the Convention was overcome by the city of Paris, whose Sections, on the 2nd December, demanded an immediate sentence against Louis, in the name

[1] Moore's *Journal*, p. 407.

of their "terrible tyrant-subduing portion of the Sovereign People!" Robespierre spoke at great length on the following day, and on this occasion he too made a distinct reference to the war and foreign nations. "Do you fear the Kings?" he cried; "a pretty means of conquering them, to seem to tremble before them; of breaking up their coalition, to spare their accomplice! What!—will the nations who hailed the declaration of rights with applause, be alienated by the punishment of their greatest enemy, and not rather be filled thereby with redoubled enthusiasm?"

This language coincided exactly with the most cherished wishes of the majority, who just at this time, as we have seen, were reckoning with great eagerness on a general convulsion in Europe. After a stormy debate, an almost unanimous decree was passed, by which the Convention confirmed Mailhe's proposition, impeached the King, and took upon itself the whole responsibility of the sentence. "Louis must be tried," so ran the decree, "and must be tried by the Convention." After two days the forms of trial were fixed by a further enactment. A Commission of 21 members was to draw up the articles of impeachment, on the contents of which Louis was to be personally examined;—whereupon sentence was to be immediately pronounced. The Convention having displayed its revolutionary zeal, could with a lighter heart reject the communistic demands made upon it; and on the 8th of December, instead of increasing the severity of the September laws concerning provisions and trade, it abolished them altogether, by a declaration of entire freedom of traffic. The Jacobins took this rebuff for the moment with tolerable patience, convinced that a victory in the trial of the King, would enable them to re-establish their despotism over property and the material relations of life.

Their opponents were pretty nearly of the same opinion, and the Gironde began to regard the fate of Louis from a different point of view. Since they had themselves occupied his former place, they had become aware what kind of force

they had let loose against him; they learned what the consequences of a new victory of the Septembrists would be to France and to themselves.

It had in fact become clear, not only to the Girondists and their opponents, but to every party, that their own existence was bound up in the fate of the Prince, who was now a helpless captive in their hands. It does not speak well for the foresight of the Gironde, that they now for the first time attained to this conviction. For that every accession of strength to the party of the Mountain was a question of life and death, and that the trial of Louis must at all events redound to the advantage of the Jacobins, appears so self-evident, that we can only wonder at the apathy with which the Gironde remained for many weeks inactive in regard to the trial of the King. The case was the same with this party, at this crisis, as with many of their associates during the September massacres. They did not recognize the danger, until it immediately threatened their own lives. Their feelings did not revolt at crime, until the ground began to quake beneath their own feet. The Girondists too, as instigators of the war of aggression, were blinded by their hope of revolutionizing the world—a hope which was to be more quickly realized by the degradation of Louis. And thus they wavered long, remained inactive, and differed among themselves; we have just seen that it was one of their own leaders, who, in the preliminary discussion, cast the first stone at the head of Louis.

Gradually, however, new doubts began to arise in their minds. The Jacobins had completely gained their object of agitating the lower classes afresh. The people of the Faubourgs, deafened by the unceasing cry of treachery, terrified by the threatening bread riots, and worked upon by the well-paid agents of Pache, were boiling with fury, and that not merely against the moderate party. Revolutionary passions blazed up again with increased violence. All the scenes were renewed which preceded the former catastrophes of the

Revolution. The popular orators of true liberty again appeared in the streets; the clamorous bawlers of the *Halles*, and the women of the fraternity club, were again set in motion; seditious mobs collected, threats were uttered, and occasional acts of violence committed. The social question was made use of, in the streets, as a weapon against the Gironde, as it had been, in the Convention, against the King. Louis was called the head, and the Gironde the shield, of the usurers; and thus the King and the authors of his fall were pierced by the same shaft.

During this state of things in Paris, the Gironde witnessed the above-mentioned change in the foreign relations of France, at the very moment when the Convention was about to bring the King before the bar of their tribunal. No event could have wounded them more deeply. They had always looked towards England with especial predilection; and peace and brotherhood with the British nation, on the one hand, and war against Austria, on the other, had always been the watchwords of their foreign policy. By the adoption of this programme they felt that they had separated themselves from the policy of the *ancien régime*, which had steadily pursued the object of humbling England by the help of Austria; that they had likewise thereby placed themselves in opposition to Lafayette, who had wished, in 1790, to preserve Belgium for the Austrians, by opposing England. By the same policy they had driven the Feuillants from power in 1792, for having corresponded with Austria and turned their backs on England and Prussia; and, lastly, it was on this ground that they had had their first skirmish with Robespierre, when the latter opposed the war with Austria, and manifested nothing but indifference and suspicion towards England. In short the thought of the English alliance filled their past, and was intended to be the guiding star of their future.

And now they were told, not only that the English ministry was arming against them, but that the whole people of

England was filled with hatred and contempt of the Revolution. Nor was there any doubt as to the reasons of this great change. All their English friends and their London agents unanimously declared, that had it not been for the September massacres, Pitt would not have ventured to frown upon them; but that by the display of the royal scaffold, he would be able to drive the English people to a war of aggression and revenge against them. The Girondists forgot how much they had themselves contributed to bring about this state of things; but they saw with grief, that the very same events which gave strength to their enemies at home, were ruining the most important interests of the nation abroad. The effect of the news from London therefore was far greater on them, than on the Ministers. The fiasco of the Propaganda, which only roused Clavière and Cambon to pass the decree of the 15th of December, and therewith to greater revolutionary fervour, induced the Girondists to retrace their steps, and to embrace with all sincerity a policy of peace. They saw that what was chiefly wanted was a radical cure of domestic evils; and they determined by one great measure to put an end to the democratical disturbances.

About twenty of their leading men were accustomed at that time to meet every evening in Valazé's house, under the presidency of Buzot, Salle and Grangeneuve, in order to prepare themselves in private conclave for the questions of the day.[1] They deliberated on the means of saving Louis, and came to the conclusion that their own antecedents would not allow them to propose the acquittal of the King directly; they therefore sought for a method, if not of immediately bringing the matter to a conclusion, at any rate of gaining time. They remembered that at the beginning of the trial, Danton had spoken of a final appeal to the nation. They

[1] Valaze's letters to his Constituents in the Imperial Archives. Papers of the Committee of Public Safety.

knew, moreover, that Lepelletier, a member of the Left, and Barère, of the Centre, approved of such a measure. They took up this idea with eager zeal, for it seemed to them to promise other advantages besides the deliverance of Louis. They were continually receiving intelligence from all the Departments of the bitter aversion felt against the party of September. The towns continued to send *Fédérés* for the protection of the Convention; and even the clubs sent votes of want of confidence in Marat to the Parisian Jacobins. The Girondists had no doubt, that if the primary Electors of the Departments could once be brought together—no matter for what purpose—they might be easily induced to make a powerful demonstration of popular indignation against the Jacobins. This consideration made them almost rejoice that the trial of the King had been carried so far, as to afford them the opportunity of carrying such a radically healing measure. They therefore determined to propose that the Convention should pronounce sentence on Louis, and subsequently lay the matter before the assemblies of primary Electors for ratification.

It is easy to fix upon the weak points of this scheme. Whoever ruled Paris, ruled the Convention also. Every thing, therefore, depended on the question, whether the Jacobins could succeed in reducing the Convention to submission by a new revolt in Paris. Since the month of September, there had been only one means of meeting this difficulty, *viz.* an imposing armed force, without which, speeches, votes, and expressions of popular will, were of no avail. While the assemblies of primary Electors were debating, a bread riot in Paris might have thrice overthrown the power of the Convention. And even if the former could really be brought to pronounce a vote of censure against the Mountain, the means would still have to be found of enforcing obedience. The Girondist plan of operations was therefore *ab initio* futile. It would have been far better to employ all their energies in bringing up larger bodies of *Fédérés* to

the capital, and to take armed possession of the vantage ground. And even if the objections to this plan were considered insurmountable—they were indeed considerable—there were other ways still open to them. Dumouriez was at this moment in open feud with the Jacobins; the Gironde might have formed an alliance with him by means of Gensonné, and the conqueror of Belgium was just the man to serve them as sword and shield against the anarchists. They might, too, have come to an agreement with Danton, who had himself spoken of an appeal to the people, and thereby marked his separation from the Jacobins. An understanding with him would have been sufficient to paralyze the boldest bands of the club; for when once Danton had been sure of success he would have been little scrupulous about ways and means.

None of these methods were easy or free from danger, but they at any rate afforded a fair chance of deliverance. It was necessary for the Gironde either resolutely to take up arms in their own name, or resolutely to unite all parties for the one great and important object—the overthrow of the Jacobins. But instead of this, they kept up their old dislike against Dumouriez; so that, in December, even Gensonné broke off the correspondence which had been hitherto kept up with the General, and openly displayed the same abhorrence of Danton as of Robespierre and Marat. The consequences of this course were immediately seen. In order to prepare the way for the meetings of the primary Electors, Buzot on the 9th of December proposed the following declaration in the Convention: "The Sovereign People in its mass meetings has the right of recalling its representatives from the Convention if they betray their country." In the first instance he obtained the approbation of the Convention by some commonplaces about the sovereignty of the people, &c.; but no sooner had the decree itself been brought forward, than it was received with so much suspicion and opposition, that Buzot himself made haste to

propose the adjournment of the matter. But the attention of the Convention was fully roused. Not only the Left, but even a great part of the Centre refused to hear any more about the assemblies of the primary Electors, because they were convinced that the Gironde were only contemplating a reformation of the Convention, for the purpose of establishing their own exclusive power. And thus this party completely isolated itself by the very first step, and rendered it impossible to make use of the appeal to the primary Electors for the deliverance of Louis.

The Jacobins saw the matter in its true light, and with a sure instinct began to work in an opposite direction. That which weighed upon their minds, was not the feeling of the Departments, which were far removed from the scene of action, and at variance among themselves, but the presence of troops of the line in Paris,[1] and above all of the bands of Girondist *Fédérés*. The important influence which Pache's new position exercised over internal affairs now became apparent. He almost entirely relieved the Jacobins from their fear of the troops of the line, by his readiness to send them out of the capital, as soon as a sufficient pretext should be pointed out; and in the present destitution of all the French armies, such a pretext might at any time be found. It was necessary, on the other hand, to win over the *Fédérés* to the popular cause, by friendly means. Robespierre continually recommended this course to the Jacobins;—and the Club, the Hôtel de Ville, and the Minister at War, cooperated to effect this grand object. Every means of flattery, seduction, and bribery, were employed on a great scale. What an important circumstance was it, therefore, that just at this moment the treasury of the War Ministry, which absorbed all the pecuniary resources of the State, was completely at the disposal of the Jacobin party! After three months of

[1] 2,400 Gendarmerie, and 2,600 Cavalry. Report of the Commune to the Convention, Jan. 5.

office Pache left a deficit of 160 millions; we may imagine how long the party fidelity of 5,000—for the most part poor, uneducated volunteers, could withstand such temptations.

It was under these circumstances that Louis XVI. appeared, on the 11th of December, before the bar of the Convention. Up to this time he had passed miserable days in the tower of the old Temple, overwhelmed by his jailors with every kind of insult and abuse, deprived of every convenience of life, and entirely cut off from intercourse with the external world. He found in his religious faith the strength to endure with feeble unresisting calmness. The only feature apparent in his character was christian patience, and he exhibited neither effeminate sorrow nor manly resistance. His behaviour was just the same during his trial. Charles of England vouchsafed to his judges no other answer than a threatening protest against the illegality of their proceedings. Louis did not murmur, when after a long slow passage through the streets of Paris, he had to stand in threadbare dress before the bar of the Convention, while Barère, as President, sat opposite to him in the seat of honour. He entered on his defence, and endeavoured to prove his innocence of the long series of charges brought against him. When at the close of his address he asked for legal counsel, the Convention sent him back to prison, where he found an order from the Hôtel de Ville, forbidding him for the future to see any of his family, as being his probable accomplices. "Not even my son" he exclaimed, "who is only seven years old?" After a long discussion this was granted him, on condition that the child should not return to his Mother. The King then gave up this last consolation in order not to rob the boy of a mother's care.

Meanwhile the envenomed feud was carried on in the Covention with ever-increasing bitterness. As the decisive moment approached, it became more and more evident that in the minds of the majority, the affected enthusiasm for freedom was giving way to an oppressive sense of justice.

Having once assumed the office of judges by despotic enactment, they wished at any rate to exercise their functions with external dignity and fairness. They wished to grant the King an advocate, and to allow the latter free access to the prisoner, and to give them both the opportunity of examining documents, and time for the preparation of the defence. The Gironde in some cases supported these demands, especially when they could thereby gain time, or thwart the Hôtel de Ville. The Jacobins, on the other hand, with convulsive fury, strained every nerve to wrest from the Assembly a sentence of death on that very day, and in that very hour. Each of the demands made in favour of Louis led to a furious quarrel, mutual accusations and noisy abuse. The commonest privileges accorded to the worst of criminals could only be carried against the obstinate bloodthirstiness of the Mountain, after a struggle of many hours. At last two advocates, and subsequently a third, were granted to Louis, who was also permitted to have free communication with them; and the 26th of December was fixed for the defence.

The interval was spent by the various parties in constant endeavours to weaken or destroy their opponents, before the commencement of the last great struggle. The Gironde once more took up the absurd idea, that it was only as partisans of Philippe Égalité, that the Mountain was so eager for the death of Louis; and Buzot thought that he had done a great thing, when, on the 16th of December, he carried a decree banishing all Bourbon princes from France. His eyes were not opened by the fact that he was heartily supported by Robespierre and St. Just; Marat and a few Cordéliers, however, who could not spare the Duke, to whose purse they had free access, raised such a terrible storm in the Faubourgs, that the Convention was compelled, on the 22nd of December, to suspend the decree. On the 24th of December, Brissot, Debry, and Breard, endeavoured, with equal ill-success, to divert the passions of the people by a series of very philan-

thropic and democratic motions—the adoption of poor children by the childless rich—the dotation of poor *fiancées* by the State—the abolition of the right of inheritance of collateral relatives, in favour of the State—and the imposition of a progressive tax on the superfluity of the rich. It was all of no avail. The galleries answered with the cry: that Louis must be sentenced; that whoever did not condemn Louis, must lose his own head. The ferment in the streets was no less violent. On the same day a citizen heard some artillery men, on the terrace of the Convention, discussing a plan of shooting Louis on the 26th, as he returned from his trial. They were confident of success, and added, that as there would of course be a tumult, they could easily make away with the royalist Deputies. What made the matter particularly serious was, that these men reckoned on the cooperation of the *Fédérés;* but Roland, who was informed of this, comforted himself with another report, that the *Fédérés* only took part in the plot for the purpose of preventing its execution. As, however, the chiefs of the Mountain themselves preferred a public execution to a murder, it was not difficult to frustrate this conspiracy.[1]

On the evening of the 25th the Jacobins filled all the galleries of the Convention with their myrmidons, that no friends of the King might gain admittance during the night. For though they disdained to murder the King, they employed every means of violence to wrest his life from the judges. In such a state of things, the speech of the advocate for the defence, De Seze—a young Parisian lawyer of great reputation, whom the people had often borne away from the bar in triumph—was only a testimony to posterity and history of his own talent and intrepidity: on the result of the trial it had no effect at all.[2] It is true that it made an impres-

[1] Protocol of the Ministerial Council, Dec. 24. Malesherbes, the King's advocate, received similar information on the 23d. — [2] The aged Malesherbes, Turgot's friend, who had offered himself to the King as advocate, was unable

sion, and the Mountain were furious at the emotion betrayed by many a Deputy;[1] but it was no longer a question of truth or feeling, but of power, and forces ready to do battle. Lanjuinais, who without belonging to the Girondist party courageously resisted the encroachments of the Mountain, proposed that the Convention should give up the title of judges, and decide on grounds of the public good. The Mountain had proposed the same course a hundred times, but they were now afraid that so open a confession of illegal violence might shock tender consciences, and therefore opposed the motion with infinite bitterness. They would not now give up the formal sanction of their violations of the law,—the warrant to commit, not only murder, but judicial murder. Amidst reproaches, accusations and invectives of every kind,—amidst the incessant roar of the galleries—the contest increased in violence, till the contending parties came to blows, and at last adjourned the debate from sheer exhaustion, without coming to any resolution.

At last, on the 27th, the great debate on the verdict commenced, on which we may truly say that not only the life of the King, but the fate of the Revolution and Europe itself, depended. Complicated as the state of affairs had hitherto been, it was clear to every one, that the death of Louis would be the victory of the only faction which went on its way without any care about the preservation of peace—without any feeling for the liberties of its own country. All the other parties had for a time made common cause with it, but the conscience of all had been awakened at

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to speak. Target had declined the task, not from cowardice, as Wachsmuth—following the always mendacious Montgaillard—has repeated, in his "*Geschichte Frankreichs zur Revolutionszeit*," but he feared that his ill health would render him unequal to the task. He exposed himself to still greater danger by printing an energetic pamphlet in Louis's favour and causing it to be distributed among the excited masses. Nettement, *Études sur les Girondins*, 90. — [1] *Revolution de Paris*, Dec. 29.

one point or other of the downward course, and all recoiled from the deed, which was to unite the horrors of the Revolution in one sanguinary crime. It was solely for this reason that the Parisian party hurried onward with so wild a zeal; because they knew that all whom they could carry with them now, would be for ever subject to them—for ever separated from the rest of mankind.

St. Just, who opened the debate, immediately applied himself to the question which, since the resolution come to by the Gironde, had absorbed the attention of all parties—the appeal to the People. His reason for opposing it, is very remarkable. "The appeal to the People," he said "is the restoration of the throne, for the salvation of the tyrant is the renewal of tyranny." That the mass of the nation, in their assemblies of primary Electors, would preserve the life of the King, was so certain a thing in his eyes, that he did not even stop to prove it, but assumed it as a matter of course. He nevertheless endeavoured to steel the courage of the Convention for the decision, by saying: "It is not you who are the accusers and the judges, but the nation who act through you." He had no scruple in using the power granted by the nation, in direct opposition to the plain will of the nation, by putting Louis to death. Robespierre had expressed the same sentiment some days before, when he said, that not even the sovereign will of the people could be allowed to abolish the Republic. St. Just drew the simple conclusion; as the preservation of the King would be dangerous to the Republic, we forbid the sovereign People to will that he should be saved. It was impossible to confess more plainly that France had no sympathy with the wishes of the Jacobins, and that their leaders had formed a settled resolution to enslave the country.

The next speaker was Salles, through whom the Gironde for the first time unfolded their new programme to the Convention in all its details. His words were no less characteristic of the position of his party, than the undisguisedly

despotic utterances of the Mountain of the views of the Jacobins. He, too, began by involuntarily testifying that the mass of the French nation cared little for the Republic; for he declared the condemnation of Louis to be necessary to curb the Royalists. In other words, he confessed that nothing but the solemn declaration that Louis was a convicted traitor would restrain the nation from replacing him on the throne. But he then proceeded to advocate the appeal to the People as a means of appeasing the other nations of Europe. This proved how great an impression had been made on the Girondists by the late events of the war; for it is impossible to imagine a more decided abandonment of their former most cherished wishes. The Convention heard, for the first time, an unreserved and distinct statement of all the crime and dangers into which an aggressive policy had thrown the Revolution. With unanswerable clearness the orator pointed out, that the execution of Louis by the command of the Convention would irretrievably cut off the possibility of retreat; and therefore advised, that on a question of existence like this, the whole nation should be called upon to decide. Lequinio replied by enlarging more fully on the declaration of St. Just, that the summoning of the primary Electors was a certain means of kindling a civil war, and that the intrigues of the Aristocrats would lead to the restoration of the throne. Robespierre went, however, to the heart of the matter on the following day, when he unsparingly laid open the ultimate plans of the Gironde. "The appeal to the people," he said, "is only an attempt to appeal from the popular will, expressed on the 10th of August, to all the secret enemies of equality; it is the surest means of uniting the royalists and all respectable persons for the oppression of the industrious, needy and innocent People." And indeed, if we translate his democratic Shibboleth into common language, we find that he thoroughly understood the intentions of his opponents. It was not so much the object of the Gironde to save the King at any price, as to make

use of his danger to rouse the middle classes to political action; by which they hoped to gather even their bitter enemies, the royalists of all shades, under their banner, and thus overthrow the rule of the Parisian proletaries. The laying open of this plan was in itself the most weighty of arguments to an Assembly, the majority of which desired the continuance of party struggles, and not a complete victory of the Gironde; Robespierre carried the question completely into the sphere of personal ambition, and thereby brought the most powerful motives to bear on the majority. All that he added about the practical danger of summoning the primary Electors was, indeed, singularly weak. When he asked, how, in a state of war against half Europe, the votes of 44,000 Communes could be taken without confusion and peril, it might have been answered, that the reprieve of Louis was the surest means of peace. When, again, he declared that an appeal to the people would lead to civil war in France, he should have been reminded, that it lay entirely with him and his associates to avert the evil, by submitting to the will of the majority. But he, like St. Just, declared that virtue was always in a minority in this world; that consequently the minority was always the representative of justice and virtue, and no one, of course, could expect virtue to submit itself to vice.

The impression which he made was so considerable, that the Gironde hastened on the 31st to put forward Vergniaud, the most illustrious of their orators. His speech is one of the greatest masterpieces of all ages. He was a man of great mark, endowed by nature with a keen perception of truth, and a splendid mastery over all the treasures of language. At an earlier period, he had been drawn by passion and indolence alike into evil ways, but he was now purified by the sense of his approaching and atoning fall; and with the hand of a master, he united all the features of the existing state of things into one grand and affecting picture. He did not enlarge on the guilt or innocence of the King, nor

the justice or injustice of his punishment—but on the consequences of regicide, and the retribution which inevitably overtook the revengeful. He held up before his hearers the war which would tear Europe in pieces, the distress and starvation of France, and the discord with which the victors would lacerate themselves and their country. Every word breathes the warmth of moral conviction, every turn is ennobled by a proud and patriotic grief; and even anger and disgust are glorified by the feeling of his own approaching death. "I fear," he says in conclusion, "that the views I am opposing will prevail; I know full well what the cry of proscription means."

All that a genuine patriotism could say under the circumstances, was urged by Vergniaud in a manner not to be surpassed. But the majority of his hearers were looking for arguments of a different kind. He ought to have convinced some that they would not jeopardize their precious lives by an honest vote; and others, that the lucrative see-saw of party intrigue would not be put a stop to by Louis's liberation. No sooner had the sound of his words died away, than the stream of selfish hopes and cares flowed on in its usual course. The great mass of the Deputies never asked which opinion was true and patriotic, but which party was strongest in Paris, and by what vote they could secure the greatest safety and the richest booty. The answer to these questions could not be given with any certainty, and the end of the great tragedy was as yet entirely undecided. The aspect of Paris was depressing and disquieting for all parties; every man felt that the future was surrounded by perils of all descriptions. Under the influence of these feelings the middle classes gave themselves up to silent resignation, or manifested towards the sufferers in the Temple a daily increasing, and more openly expressed compassion. The Republicans experienced the reaction in the public sentiment;—they saw themselves shunned, repelled and despised. In some of the Sections the majority changed sides; in sev-

eral theatres royalist allusions were applauded, and more than once the Marseillaise was drowned by the song: "*O Richard! O! mon roi!*"[1] The democrats beheld these signs of the times with redoubled fury, and tried to raise their courage by noise and tumult. Marat had long sounded the sentiments of the majority, both of the people and the Convention, and described the position of affairs with shameless sincerity. "The only means" he cried "of securing the victory to justice, is to force the traitors to do their duty; the rascals of the Convention can only be kept in the right path by fear of the people's vengeance; when the ex-king has been beheaded and Roland turned out, the reign of equality will begin; ye good and weak patriots rally round me."[2] The patriots and especially the Civic Authorities proceeded to act upon this summons.

In order to secure to themselves the superiority in armed forces, they drove the better classes from service in the National Guard by every kind of insult, and strengthened their own party, by enrolling all the quarrelsome and plunder-loving rabble from all quarters of the kingdom.[3] The Sectional Committees of Police proceeded to make innumerable arrests, as they had done in September. The Jacobins declared that they would not quit the field without a contest for life and death. One Section declared itself (as on the 8th of August), in a state of permanent insurrection; another informed the Convention that even if the latter pronounced a verdict of acquittal, either Louis should die or all republicans perish.[4] The Hôtel de Ville once more passed the illegal resolution that the names of the 8,000 and the 20,000 should be printed, and held up as objects of wrath to all the friends of freedom.[5] And all these proceedings produced

[1] *Revol. de Paris*, Dec. 29. Jan. 5. — [2] *Journal de la Rép. Franc.*, Dec. 13. — [3] Report of the Commune to the Convention, Jan. 5. — [4] Dec. 24, Section Theatre Français. Dec. 27th, Luxembourg. Gensonné in the Convention, Jan. 2nd. Bourdon in the Jacobin Club, Dec. 30. — [5] *Revolution de Paris*, Dec. 29.

so great a feeling of terror, that more than 14,000 persons fled from Paris in the last week of the year, to escape a repetition of the September massacres.[1] It became evident that the sympathy of the great mass of the people was on the side of the King and the Gironde, but the boldness for unscrupulous action on that of the Mountain. Where the powers of the Hôtel de Ville fell short, the Police Committee of the Convention—at that time the most powerful organ of the political police, and filled with followers of Danton and Marat—came to its aid. The Government and the Gironde had no other means of resistance than the 5,600 *Fédérés*. But in this body, too, more and more alarming symptoms showed themselves; and the Gironde—which had hitherto resisted the zeal of the Jacobins in hurrying on the trial—now began to wish for a termination of the crisis, notwithstanding the favourable intelligence which they were continually receiving from the provinces.

The longer the discussion in the Convention lasted, the more violent became the agitation on either side. On the 3rd of January, the Police Committee reported that a correspondence had been discovered between Louis and the three leaders of the Gironde, Vergniaud, Guadet and Gensonné. This was nothing more than the letters of the 20th and 26th already mentioned, which had been delivered by Boze, and therefore a full statement of the fact was sufficient to clear the accused from all reproach of royalist intrigues. But in the excited state of the public mind, a shade of suspicion still rested on them. Outside the walls of the Convention the mob was raging in full conviction of the treachery of the Gironde; in the Convention itself, more than one of the independent members were anxious about the consequence of a victory of the Gironde, and the unfavourable impression made by Buzot's motion respecting the electoral assemblies was confirmed and extended. When

[1] *Chronique de Paris*, Dec. 26.

Barbaroux, on the 4th of January, moved the closing of the debate he was answered at great length by Barère, who was himself one of the advocates of the appeal to the People, but who now demanded that sentence of death should be pronounced against Louis by the Convention alone. It is impossible to imagine a more striking testimony of the state of public feeling.

Meanwhile the Gironde thought that they had no reason to despair of victory, and they now directed their attention to the all-important question of the police of Paris. On the 9th of January, at the new election of the Conventional Police Committee, they succeeded in filling all the posts with their own adherents, and thus gaining an organ for the surveillance of the capital. But the Jacobins were not long in making their countermove. They made continual efforts to win over the already wavering *Fédérés;* the Hôtel de Ville demanded 120 pieces of artillery from the War Minister, for the Parisian Sections; and the Commune, on the 13th of Jan., ordered that all the theatres should be closed, as a means of exciting the masses. Every Section formed for itself a Committee of surveillance, with unlimited police authority, and the Gravilliers Section proposed the establishment of a great Police Committee for the whole city; nay, even demanded the formation of a jury for the prosecution of all "appellants"—as the advocates of an appeal to the people were called. At the same time the social question was again brought forward. On the 13th, a deputation of 48 city Districts appeared before the Convention, and proposed the equalization of the value of paper money and silver. No one, of course, expected that the request would be granted, but an opportunity was afforded of shouting to the Gironde, amid the applause of the galleries, that they protected the usurers, and would come to a dishonourable end. The effect of all these machinations was very considerable. Riots took place every evening in front of the theatres; some bands of the *Fédérés* sent in their adhesion to the Jacobins, and on

the 14th the guns, which had been readily given up by Pache, rattled through the Streets. All the attempts of the Gironde to thwart these proceedings by an order from the Convention were in vain. And thus with open preparations for an armed revolt before their eyes, the Convention proceeded to give their votes on the fate of Louis.

As early as the 13th a contest took place respecting the order in which the different questions should be voted upon. The Gironde thought that the question of the appeal to the People should be decided first, while the Mountain wished to bring it on last. At last Fonfrede carried a motion, that the question of guilt or innocence should be answered first of all, then that of the appeal, and lastly that of the penalty. This was in accordance with the wishes, but not, as soon became apparent, with the interests, of the Gironde. After the Convention had almost unanimously declared Louis guilty of high-treason, 283 members voted for the appeal to the People, and 424 against it. At least a hundred of the latter had no wish for the King's blood, but they saved themselves for a favourable vote on the penalty,[1] partly from dislike of the other plans which the Gironde founded on the assemblies of the Electors, and partly from fear of the Parisians, who for that very purpose denounced the appeal to their bands as the very acme of treason. On this point, therefore, the defeat of the Gironde was certain, and they felt it all the more deeply because a considerable number of their party had voted with their opponents. With renewed courage the Jacobins now prepared for the last struggle respecting the sentence of death; they knew that the rejection of the appeal by no means implied success in this main object of their efforts, and they strained every nerve to banish the last remnant of independence and courage from the Convention. They caused the report to be spread from various quarters, that the gates of the city were to be closed, the

[1] Moore's *Journal*, p. 574.

prison massacres renewed, and the Convention destroyed together with Louis, if it endeavoured to impede the vengeance of the people.[1] Such threats, indeed, had never been wanting, but they had never exercised their full force until now, because just at this moment the only weapon of the Gironde shivered in their hands, when the desertion of the *Fédérés* to the Parisians was completed on the 17th. This decided the matter: the independent members of the Convention felt like men who stand unarmed before a hungry pack of wolves; and they threw the head of the King to them as a means of effecting their own escape.

Sheer violence alone, therefore, on the one side, and pale terror, on the other, decided the majority of the Convention to vote for the death of Louis; and not any kind of political calculation or enthusiasm, and certainly no aversion to royalist reaction, nor the too eager intoxication of freedom. On this point the most initiated of the men of that period, both among the authors and the victims of the catastrophe, were perfectly agreed, and expressed their conviction publicly, and in the Convention itself, without any qualification or contradiction. As early as the 5th of January, when one of the Sections of Paris threatened a revolt, Guadet, one of the leaders of the Valazé faction, said that the *Fédérés* alone prevented the execution of the threat. And now Robespierre announced to his electors that it would have been all over with freedom, if the *Fédérés* had not seen through the Girondists' intrigues; but that they had fortunately at the last moment, in common with the Marseillois, done justice to the Parisians, joined the people, and thereby given faction its death-stroke. He spoke still more openly in the Convention three mornings later. "On what did the salvation of the country, and the punishment of the tyrant, depend? On the courage of the people, the energy of the patriots, and above

[1] Report of the Mayor to the Convention, Jan. 16. "I have every reason" he added "to believe these reports".

all on the unexpected adhesion of the *Fédérés*. If they had remained blind for two days longer, the tyrant would have been acquitted, and the edge of the sword turned against the patriots. But their fraternization with the people discouraged the intriguers, fettered the hostile faction and turned the scale in favour of the patriots." The *Fédérés* themselves addressed the Convention to the same effect on the 4th of March: "Our union with the Jacobins," they said, "saved Paris, and brought the tyrant to the scaffold; we resisted all the efforts of Barbaroux to gain us over to the appeal to the People; if we had not been in Paris the inviolability of Louis XVI. would have destroyed the Republic."[1]

It is very clear that no legislative Assembly, whatever party might predominate in it, would have listened in silence to such declarations, if their truth had not been indubitable and universally known. And even in this case, these repeated boasts throw a glaring light on the depth of the political confusion which prevailed. What a pitch of corruption must have been reached, before an ambitious party could consider it advantageous, incessantly to remind the nation that the Convention voted under the fear of bayonets! They knew that they had irrevocably drawn upon themselves the abhorrence of the country, and they were therefore compelled to support their cause by force alone. It was not, then, without good reason that they incessantly boasted of their deeds of violence. They employed but one language towards the enslaved nation: *oderint dum metuant*—hate but fear!

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[1] To the same effect Amar, in the act of impeachment against the Girondists (*Conf.* Meillan, 294): *Paris aurait nagé dans le sang, et la liberté était perdue peut-etre sans ressource, si les Fédérés, appelés dans cette ville par les calomnies, n'avaient pas abjuré les erreurs dangereuses.—Mais ils virent, ils s'indignèrent de l'audace avec laquelle les Députés calomniateurs les avaient trompés. Ils se réunirent aux Jacobins, celebrèrent avec les Parisiens une fête civique sur la place du Carrousel où ils avaient forcé de se rendre le bataillon de Marseillois égarés par Barbaroux. La trame des Conjurés fut rompue.*

And thus terror reigned in the Convention, and compelled it, on the 16th of January, to complete with trembling hands the murder of the King. By the dawn of that day, the troops of Fournier and Maillard, the bandits of the 6th of October, and the day-labourers of the 2nd of December, filled all the courts and passages of the building. The hours passed in preparatory discussions, and it was not until 10 o'clock at night that the voting began. The Hall was dimly lighted, the Deputies went about in restless silence, or talked together in a low voice; the galleries were crowded with armed bands mingled with female fanatics, drinking and smoking, who roared out their abuse from the darkness whenever a vote for acquittal was given. No one doubted what would happen if the sentence of death did not gain a majority; some few were roused by the feeling of constraint to indignation and defiance, but the greater part yielded to their fears, not only for their own life, but for the future of the country. The day before, Vergniaud had spoken with the advocates of the King, and had expressed his abhorrence of the sentence of death; he was among the first to vote, and when he saw the threatening crowd before him gnashing their teeth, he voted for death![1] More than twenty Deputies of similar opinions followed his example; they could not, they said at a later period, kindle a civil war to save one human being.[2] In their case there was still some thought of the public good; but examples of undisguised selfishness were not wanting. "Good heavens," said Count Cochon, in the splendid days of the Empire, "I thought Louis quite innocent, but was I to allow myself to be maltreated as a traitor to the people!"[3] The voting by nominal appeal continued throughout the night and the following day. At

[1] Poujoulat, *Rev. Franç.*, I. 395. From the mouth of a *collaborateur* of Deseze. — [2] Harmand de la Meuse, *anecdotes relatives à la Revol.* — [3] Villiaumé, *Hist. de la Revol.* II. 362. From an ear-witness. The author is a decided democrat, but says that he could give 20 similar cases.

midday, a few yards from the Hall of the Assembly, the proletaries of the Sections were celebrating their feast of fraternity with the *Fédérés*, on the Place du Carrousel. In the same hour the Hôtel de Ville resolved to propose a tax upon the rich, from the proceeds of which bread should be supplied to the poor. At eight o'clock in the evening, the voting in the Convention was concluded; and just at this moment a despatch arrived in which the King of Spain asked for a postponement of the trial, to allow time to mediate a peace between France and Germany. All the most powerful momenta—mob violence, communistic tendencies, and revolutionary war—were crowded together in this final act of the sad tragedy; and all impelled in the same direction. Robespierre, who had so often spoken against the war, and who, at a later period, brought forward the declaration of war as one of many reasons for sending the Girondists to the scaffold, now spurned a peace which would have compelled him to spare Louis. "Tyrants," said Danton, "are only vulnerable in the head; with the tyrants of Europe we can only treat by battles—I vote for the death of the tyrant." So the chief journal of the Jacobins had said on the 12th; "Let the war begin in the Spring, there is nothing between the fall of France and liberty on the one side, and the annihilation of Austria and all the Bourbons on the other." On the motion of Danton, the Spanish despatch was shelved, and the result of the division declared.

Of the 721 members present 361—a majority of one—had voted for the death of Louis. 26 had joined in this vote, but had demanded a discussion on the question whether the execution of the sentence ought not for political reasons to be deferred; 13 had made the postponement a condition of the verdict of death; and 321 voted for imprisoment or some other punishment.[1] The Jacobins had every reason to be satisfied with the result; for it was now evident that the

[1] According to the list revised on the 18th.

Assembly was ruled by fear of their threats. They all the more imperiously demanded that the last obstacle—the proposed postponement—should be immediately removed. Tallien with shameless affectation called on them not to prolong Louis' death-agony; and Robespierre—who little thought that the same man, from similar motives of humanity, would one day advocate his destruction—supported him. They contested the question during the whole of the 18th; until the President, late at night, adjourned the sitting without any decision having been arrived at. The boldest members of the Mountain were inclined to prolong the sitting and to seize the reins of government at once. On this occasion their supporters among the people forced their way into the Assembly itself, and a confused and noisy discussion was carried on until midnight in the half-lighted hall. Santerre, however, assured them that their victim would not escape them on the morrow, and they separated—after a short and more private consultation of the chiefs—with the understanding that they were to meet again in full force, at an early hour on the 19th. It then became evident that the majority had not hesitated on the previous day from a newly awakened independence, but only from a last remnant of shame. The result of the division, which was not ended till after midnight, was, that 380 voted against and 310 for the postponement; and the matter was irrevocably decided.

Let us now take one more glance at the Temple and its occupant. Louis had for many weeks entertained no doubt as to the issue of the trial, and was prepared for the worst. The first intelligence of the sentence was brought to him by one of his advocates, the venerable Malesherbes, who wept bitterly. The King embraced him quite composedly with the words, "Death has no terrors for me—I build my hopes on the mercy of Heaven." He remained in this frame of mind throughout the intervening days, without either sorrow or anger, and almost cheerful; as far as he himself was concerned, he had left far behind him all earthly hopes

and wishes. "I do not fear death," he said to his Chamberlain, Clery, "but I shudder when I think of the Queen and my unhappy children." He overcame even these feelings; and felt a deep compassion for the nation which had delivered him into the hands of his tormentors; "I see," he said "a long series of horrors, and an eternal feud, in which France will lacerate herself." And thus he passed through the last and bitterest agony—the parting with his family—whom he left behind him defenceless and friendless in the hands of barbarians. After one outbreak of long accumulated grief for the space of two hours, after one never-ending embrace amid tears and sobs—"now," he said, "that too is past!—why must we love and be loved in the midst of such sorrows—let us now think only of the one thing needful—our eternal salvation." After peaceful sleep he awoke on the morning of the 21st with a feeling of physical weakness, and could scarcely resist the cold of the morning: but he quickly nerved himself by the remembrance of God's eternal justice, and unmoved by the brutal insults of his jailers, and with a last look at the windows of his loved ones, he mounted the carriage which was to bear him to the scaffold.

He was the only human being in Paris whose soul was at peace on that dreadful day. The less hardened adherents of the Revolution writhed under the weight of conscience—the Gironde saw its own fall approaching—and the Jacobins gnashed their teeth at the loneliness in which they were left to celebrate their triumph. All the shops in Paris were closed during the day—the silence of dull consternation rested on the city—and in the evening, the theatres, which were opened by command, were thinly attended. *"The women,"* said a Jacobin journal, *"were melancholy on that day, and this contributed not a little to the gloomy aspect of the city."* "We have burned our ships behind us," cried Marat.

This was the most concise expression of the real state of affairs. The foundation stone of the Republic was on this

day laid by murderous hands in blood, and every part of the growing structure was cemented with blood and murder. The victors of the 19th had now no alternative in France but their own death, or the annihilation of all their opponents. They were not discontented with their position, because they looked upon the overthrow of all existing institutions as their own proper mission, and the great object of the Revolution. They did not see that although wars may be carried on, yet States cannot be founded, by such means. But in reality, though their crime rendered the restoration of the throne infinitely more difficult for the moment, it also destroyed the future of the Republic. A great and civilized nation cannot in the long run endure to feed on a crime and to be ruled by murder.

CHAPTER V.

BEGINNING OF THE WAR BETWEEN ENGLAND AND FRANCE.

French design of incorporating Belgium which England regards as a casus belli.—France vainly endeavours to intimidate England.—New plans against Holland.—Proceedings in Belgium.—England remains firm.—The French ministry pauses.—The question decided by the victory of the Jacobins in the King's trial.—Dissolution of the ministry.—Dumouriez attempts a fresh negotiation.—France declares war against the maritime powers.—Pache chosen mayor of Paris.—Democratic reorganisation of the army.—Declaration of war against Spain.

The victory of the Jacobins on the 17th of January, not only settled the question of Louis's execution, but that of the war between France and the Maritime Powers. Not that the King of England felt any great zeal to make a crusade as the blood-avenger of Louis in favour of the inviolability of all thrones; such sentiments were at that time only found in one crowned head, which in practical matters showed little capacity—the King of Prussia. But England had material interests of the highest importance which were greatly endangered by the greediness of the Jacobins, and the defeat of the moderate party of the Convention became, therefore, the signal for a general war.

Since the beginning of December, the French government had contracted their far-reaching schemes within definite limits. They were compelled to give up the hope of revolutionizing the German Empire and establishing a Republic in the British Islands; but they were all the more determined in the resolve to subject the countries which had hitherto been occupied in the name of freedom, to the rule

of France. This object was more especially pursued in Belgium by Danton and three other Deputies, who were sent as Commissioners of the Convention to that country on the 30th of November. They were directed to enquire into the condition of the Provinces, and to consider Dumouriez's complaints against Pache and the Committee formed to purchase supplies for the army. Their reports revealed the abuses existing in the administration of the army, the most crying of which were removed by the Convention.[1] Other evils Dumouriez himself, after the pause in the hostilities, attacked and remedied with undiminished vigour; *e. g.* he succeeded in cashing his *assignats* at the bank of Amsterdam at a very fair exchange,[2] and in raising 60 millions by several loans from the Belgian clergy; and was thus enabled for the time to secure supplies for his army without oppressing the population. But his political relations with the Commissioners of the Convention, and consequently the position of Belgium itself, grew worse and worse. Danton indeed endeavoured to maintain as much as possible his confidential intimacy with the General, and promised him a speedy deliverance from Pache's troublesome interference, and a gradual improvement in the state of Paris. But as regarded Belgium, he remained inexorable in his determination to plunder, revolutionize, and finally incorporate that country. There was once for all no other course, he said;—the financial necessities of France were already too urgent, and the ambition of the Parisian *Sansculottes* too much inflamed; whoever wished gradually to lead them back to better order, ought to be particularly careful not to thwart them in this foreign question. We shall not inquire how much Belgian money he and his colleagues put into their own pockets, since there is no proof of theft, and yet no reason for believing in the disinterestedness of Danton; at all events their proceedings in Belgium were of the most hateful kind. They were well aware of the aversion of the Belgians to the pro-

[1] Decree of Dec. 15th. — [2] *Mémoires*, III. 379.

ject of incorporation, and as the immediate employment of force appeared to them hazardous in Dumouriez's present frame of mind, they systematically set to work to bring about a state of general confusion and dissolution. No authority was left intact, and every effort was made to overthrow the lately elected government, and to bring in the *Sansculottes* of the purest water as the sole possessors of power. In a popular assembly at Liege, Danton bitterly complained that not a single traitor had been put to death; his agents in Brussels stirred up the mob against the Municipality; and every where union with France was made the watch-word. It was certainly very remarkable with what firmness the entire population resisted these schemes. It was not the small Imperial party which came forward at this crisis; the Noblesse and the Clergy were too much intimidated to express their feelings openly; and even the peasants and the proletaries of the towns—who in Belgium were good Catholics and under the influence of their priests—kept aloof in fear and anger. It was the sentiments of the middle class of citizens which were most openly and strongly expressed. Sturdy artisans, honest guildmasters, and patriotic merchants, who out of hatred to Austria had joined the Jacobin clubs in crowds, made themselves heard at their meetings. And when their opposition was stifled, they left the clubs in a body, and thereby threatened the very existence of those instruments which had become so essential to the French. The Commissioners had no other means of keeping up the appearance of popularity, than filling the empty benches with the scum of the French battalions—the most disorderly of the volunteers,—who in the character of the sovereign Belgian People vied with one another in proposing the union of their cities with France. Such was the state of things when the Decree of the 15th of December was published, which invested the Commissioners with all the attributes of omnipotent despotism. Dumouriez gnashed his teeth in impotent fury, and determined to go to Paris

himself, and get the measure annulled. He once more advised the Belgians to lend the strength of union to their resistance, and—since the Decree spoke only of those countries which had adopted no definite constitution—to elect representatives to a Belgian National Convention. By this means, he said, they might unite the scattered forces of the towns and provinces, and withdraw the country from the operation of the decree by the establishment of a republican form of government. Even this course of proceeding would have been unavailing, in opposition to the will of the French Government; but not even the attempt was made, because the majority of the Belgians adhered to their ancient laws, and rejected the very notion of a Convention. In Brussels, indeed, a meeting of the Sections took place for the purpose of carrying out Dumouriez's suggestion; but no less than 17 out of the 21 elected were decided partisans of the old constitution. The matter, therefore, was carried no further in the other provinces, and the elected of Brussels were summarily imprisoned by the *sansculottes,* or, as one of the leaders here called his company, the *sanschemises.* After that nothing more was said about a Belgian Convention. Nor could Dumouriez produce any effect by his personal influence on the Rulers in Paris. It was idle to talk of resigning, for he was not in a position to deal a decisive blow against Pache; and the representations made by him to Cambon in a conversation respecting the Decree of the 13th of December, only drew from the selfconceited and irritable Deputy a sharp rebuff. In short the incorporation of Belgium was a settled matter.

This determination most injuriously affected the good understanding hitherto kept up with England. It may be said, generally speaking, of the 18th century, as of the present day, that the one-sided aggrandizement of one Power was never a matter of indifference to the other Powers of Europe. Attempts of this nature occurred more frequently then than now, because the standard of public morality was a few de-

grees lower than it has since become. Europe has passed through the rude discipline of affliction in the school of the Revolution. Many of these attempts succeeded, because many States had yet to win their natural and proper position in the European system; but they all of them met with great resistance and were accompanied by violent and widely extended political convulsions. If the first Partition of Poland was not resisted by the Western Powers, it was only because the times were not well adapted for giving a thorough and final check to the encroachments of the Russians, and because the participation of the German Powers in the act of spoliation was felt to be an advantage to all parties. And on the other hand, at what a fearful cost of blood did Frederick the Great obtain possession of Silesia!—and with what decision did Europe hurl back the restless ambition of Joseph II! And so, in the present case, it was a matter of course that England would interpose both by word and deed directly France prepared to take possession of Belgium. The attempt to revolutionize London and Amsterdam, by stirring up the popular masses in those cities, had induced Pitt to take defensive measures, and the decree of the 15th roused England to uphold the balance of power in Europe, even, if necessary, by an offensive war.

Every thing was here combined to produce an impression on the public mind in England, that a flagrant international wrong had been committed. England had guaranteed the possession of Belgium to the Emperor in 1790—and the closing of the Scheldt to the Dutch, and its political position in Holland to the House of Orange in 1788. Under an imperative sense of her own interests, she had struggled for centuries to prevent the French from gaining a footing in Antwerp and Ostend. Prudence, fidelity to treaties, the retrospect of the past and the hopes of the future—all called loudly upon her not to allow the balance of Europe to be disturbed, and least of all in Belgium. A French expedition to Brussels might be borne with, and even the establish-

ment and farther developement of a Belgian Republic might be patiently observed and watched; but a permanent occupation of Belgium by the French was sufficient to rouse any English government to take up arms. Such an event touched England in many respects more nearly than a Russian occupation of the Danubian territories would affect Austria.

The French Ministers by no means deceived themselves as to the state of things in Europe. Pitt, on his part, had stated to several of their envoys that he was very desirous of peace; that he was willing to dispense with all diplomatic formalities, and—in spite of the non-recognition of the Republic—to treat with their Ambassador Chauvelin, and even with their secret agents, directly they produced definite powers of negotiation; but what he could not allow, was an aggressive policy of conquest on the part of France, and a violation of the rights of English allies.[1] This language produced a great impression in Paris; for however bravely the Ministers had talked of overthrowing the English despot they saw all the evils of a war with England the more clearly, the nearer they approached it.[2] There were even some who spoke and acted in favour of peace. Lebrun's principal Chef de bureau, Maret, had endeavoured to come to an understanding with Pitt in personal interviews. Even the secret London agents, Noël and Benoît, began to make their reports in a conciliating tone;[3] and de Maulde, the ambassador at the Hague, in consequence of his leaning towards peace,[4] was unceremoniously recalled from his post. The intrigues and despatches of Chauvelin, on the contrary, produced the very opposite effect. This Marquis, who had once belonged to Talleyrand's clique, had been sent to London

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[1] Lord Grenville in the House of Lords, Feb. 1. 1793. Brissot's report to the Convention, Jan. 12. Pitt's words to Maret in Miles's *Authentic correspondence*, 94. — [2] Morris. — [3] Miles to Lebrun, *Authentic Correspondence* &c. — [4] *Vid.* his report in the *Publiciste*, 2. Ventose VIII.

in February to bring about an alliance, and if possible a change of Ministers. In his high and splendid post he indulged his vanity and independent spirit to the utmost, and left the business of the embassy to the superior dexterity of Talleyrand. But the 10th of August deprived him of this valuable assistant (who would probably have been ready enough to accept the Republic, but was inexorably rejected by it), and at the same time stripped his position of all its official splendour; since England did not immediately recognize the Republic, nor, consequently, its ambassador. Chauvelin however lost no time in recommending himself to the new powers at Paris. As quondam aristocrat he took care to display a double amount of coarse and arrogant patriotism, and determined, above all things, to force Lord Grenville to acknowledge the Republic, and himself as its representative. He still placed some hope on the London democrats, was convinced that Pitt would not dare to go to war, and continually exhorted the French Ministry to energy, as the surest means of extorting peace.

Such exhortations, as we may easily suppose, found a welcome hearing from the French Ministers. Lebrun forbade all the other agents from entering into any kind of negotiation with Pitt; and informed the latter that communications from England were only to be made through Chauvelin. All that Pitt had said about his desire for peace was regarded in Paris as a proof of weakness and fear. The French rulers resolved to act with tenfold energy, and by louder and more terrible threats to frighten the English Minister away from all interference in continental politics. With this view Chauvelin delivered a despatch to the Ministry in London, on the 27th of December, in which he discussed all the complaints made by England against France;—the decree of November 19th—the opening of the Scheldt—and the threatened invasion of Holland. He declared that Holland was quite safe, but that the other two questions were irrevocably settled. He called on England to lay aside her

unworthy wavering, and to declare whether she chose to begin a war with France on such insignificant grounds. To increase the effect of this note, the Minister of the Marine issued a public circular, on the 30th, to all the Jacobins of the maritime towns, stating that King George wished for war, and that he should therefore effect a landing in England, throw 50,000 caps of liberty on her shores, and raise the English republic on the ruins of the throne. On the following day the Convention decreed the appointment of a Committee for general defence, with open reference to a war with England; "which," said the member who brought up the report "we have no reason to fear, since our fishing boats are ready to carry 100,000 men across the Channel, who will put an end to the contest on the ruins of the Tower." It was in connexion with this that Lebrun at this time drew up instructions for Genet, who was to go to North America as ambassador. This envoy was directed to negotiate an alliance with a view of punishing by exclusion those Powers which aimed at commercial monopoly—especially, Lebrun went on to say, as France had a special interest in protecting herself from England and Spain.

The state of things in Paris therefore was that the Ministers did not exactly wish for war with England, but were determined to keep Belgium and the Scheldt, and therefore endeavoured, in the first place, to intimidate England by a harsh demeanour. Unfortunately this course of conduct was by no means well adapted to the actual state of things. Pitt was far from wishing for war, and still less to undertake an expedition for the punishment of the regicides. On the contrary, he was in many respects more peaceably inclined than even Lebrun supposed; but his willingness to yield had its fixed limits, and his firm, austere and logical mind was utterly inaccessible to intimidation. Chauvelin's threats, which brought the possibility of war so close before his eyes, had no other effect than to make him look about for means of increasing the warlike resources of his country, and to

inquire of Spain, in the first place, whether she would make common cause with England in the coming war. In Madrid the liberal Aranda had been succeeded in the conduct of public affairs, on the 15th of November, by the ex-lifeguardsman Godoi, now Duke of Alcudia, the favourite of the Queen. The latter, partly from fear of the French arms, and partly from a desire of interceding for the deliverance of Louis the XVI., had offered neutrality to the French government on the 15th of December, and therefore declined the proposal of an armed alliance with England.

What tended in a still greater degree than this failure to increase the inclination for peace in England, was the simultaneous communication of the Austrian ambassador in London, from which Pitt received the first official intelligence of the plans for the Partition of Poland and the Bavarian Exchange. Both these schemes appeared to him prejudicial to the stability of Europe, and the interests of England; but he considered the Partition of Poland as by far the worst and most pernicious of the two. Now it was evident that England could offer no effectual resistance to this measure, if she herself had a great war upon her hands; and she therefore hastened to take the most energetic steps in every direction towards the maintenance of the peace of Europe. Pitt held out to Austria the prospect of English assistance in the matter of the Bavarian Exchange, if that country would consent to make terms with France under his mediation. He declared in Berlin and St. Petersburg that a counter-revolution in France was not to be thought of; and that, in his opinion, all ground of war would be removed, if France gave up her conquests, and respected the rights of other States.[1] He made no mention of the French Constitution, nor even of Louis's personal fate; he demanded nothing but the observance of the principle which the Con-

[1] Grenville to Lord Whitworth in St. Petersburg. Goltz to the Prussian Ministry, Jan. 24.

stituent Assembly had so solemnly proclaimed; that France did not aim at conquest. Only one thing was wanting, to which the wishes of the French would naturally be directed —a formal recognition of the Republic by the Powers. Pitt had only too much reason not to lay any stress upon this in Vienna and St. Petersburg for the present; but this recognition was virtually comprehended in the proposed conclusion of peace; and with regard to England herself, he took care to let it be known, that, provided always France gave up her conquests, he was not averse even to this concession.[1] The answer which Lord Grenville returned, on the 31st of December, to the note of the 27th, was in full accordance with these views. He repeated that Chauvelin, whom the new government of France had not accredited, could only be regarded as a private person; but that England gladly seized the opportunity of making known, even through him, that she earnestly desired peace, and would never take up arms as long as France abstained from violating the security and independence of foreign States. The policy of England was clearly and unequivocally comprised in these simple propositions.

But the French Ministers either continued to found their hopes on the weakness of England, or overcame the dread they had hitherto entertained of an English war; at all events they adhered to the course which they had already adopted. It was in vain that de Maulde, who had just arrived in Paris, assured them, as the result of his communications with the Grand Pensionary Spiegel and the English Ambassador, Lord Auckland, that peace with the Maritime Powers was certain, if France did not incorporate Belgium, and war just as certain if she did. The French Cabinet resolved to increase the intensity of the crisis, and to go as near to a declaration of war as was possible without an open attack.[2] They had again received favourable intelligence

[1] Miles to Lebrun, Jan. 2; with comments by H. Marsh, 377. — [2] From the Protocols of the Cabinet Council.

from other quarters. The democratic revolution had at last broken out in Geneva, and that important town had already placed itself under the protection of General Kellermann; Custine again began to speak of the possibility of a truce with Prussia if full powers to treat were entrusted to him; and in the Bay of Naples, Admiral Truguet had obtained, not indeed the extradition of Acton, but at any rate the recognition of the Republic and an unarmed neutrality. The self-confidence of the Government was thereby raised afresh, and Chauvelin received instructions no longer to remain upon the defensive, but to bring forward charges against the English Government, on account of their violations of international law.

He obeyed these directions in two notes, bearing date the 7th of January, in which he demanded the repeal of the Alien act, and the laws respecting the French *assignats* and the export of arms and corn. He professed to see in these enactments either a violation of the commercial treaty of 1786, or a proof of undisguised hostility. These examples, however, were not well chosen; since the provisions of 1786 respecting the strangers' police, had been entirely lost sight of by the French even in the passport law of May 1792; and all the other laws had been caused by the universally known propaganda of the French agents in London. Lebrun may himself have felt this, and therefore have laid the chief weight on a third note which he drew up in Paris on the same day. After he had once more pointed out the unfounded nature of England's apprehensions, repudiated all desire of conquest, and promised to limit the occupation of Belgium to the period "which the Belgians needed for the establishment of their freedom," he concluded with an open declaration, that if England notwithstanding continued to arm, France would be compelled with regret, but without fear, to prepare for war.

The French rulers therefore expressly adhered to the acquisition of Belgium; for the foregoing phrase about the

establishment of Belgian freedom had pretty nearly the same meaning as the distinction made by the Emperor Nicholas, in 1854, between the conquest and the custody of Constantinople, and really threatened England with war if she did not lay aside her arms. Such being the prevailing sentiment of the French Cabinet it was soon induced by circumstances to proceed still further in the same direction. On the very same day on which Lebrun had signed the above mentioned repudiation of all aggressive tendencies, the Cabinet received a memorial from several Dutch patriots, in which they described the defenceless state of Zealand, and called for a rapid attack upon that island. After they had given further particulars on the 8th, the Ministers remembered that Dumouriez was still in the neighbourhood—he had retired into the country to wait for a final answer to his complaints—and invited him on the 9th to give his opinion on the plan. As he had himself four weeks before sketched a similar expedition, he took up the idea with the most lively zeal, was soon busily engaged in the details of its execution, and already saw himself at the head of an independent Batavian Republic, gloriously raised above all the annoyances of the last few months. The Ministers, it is true, did not advance quite so quickly. They regarded war with England as nearly certain, but wished to wait for the English answer before actually commencing hostilities; they therefore came to the resolution to take all preliminary measures for the Dutch expedition, but to postpone the execution of them.[1]

With these prospects in Holland before them the Ministry were less inclined than ever to delay taking complete possession of Belgium. By the 8th the appointment and instructions of 30 Government Commissioners were signed, professedly for the purpose of providing for the French

[1] Protocols of the Ministry, Jan. 7th, 8th and 9th. Dumouriez indeed wrote to Miranda on the 10th as if "his" plan had been already sanctioned.

army according to the decree of December 15th, but with secret orders to acknowledge no other authorities in Belgium than the Municipalities, to assume the control over them, to bring the *assignats* into circulation, and by every means to prepare the way for a formal union with France.

We see that the courage necessary to take the offensive had gradually sprung up again, and had now attained its full height. But that it had not yet struck very deep root in the Ministerial circles became evident immediately afterwards, when the expected answer arrived from London. The tenor of this reply was such as any one who was acquainted with England at that period might have foreseen. A despatch from Chauvelin arrived on the 11th, to the effect that his protest against the Alien Bill had not been accepted at all. The next day Maret received a confidential communication from London, in which the alternative of resigning the Belgian booty, or fighting the Maritime Powers, was set before him with all possible clearness and decision; and on the 18th, Lord Grenville declared that the English preparations could not be suspended, but that, on the contrary, England was determined to oppose by arms every encroachment on the part of France.

At first there was an outburst of anger. On the 13th the Convention issued orders to equip 30 ships of the line, and to build 25 new ones. With the former it was intended that Colonel Laclos should make an attack on British India. On the 14th, the Ministry settled that the land forces were to be raised to the number of 500,000 men. But in their secret hearts very anxious considerations began to arise; it was easy enough in the rostra to trample England in the dust, but those who had the actual execution of the work soon felt the difficulties of the task; in short the Ministry began all at once to beat a retreat on all points. As early as the 14th, express orders were sent to General Miranda to do all in his power to ensure the neutrality of Holland. Three days later a further postponement of the expedition

against Zealand was ordered, and on the 16th the instructions of Genet were subjected to a modification, which substituted for the proposed offensive alliance with America, the offer of free trade with the French colonies, if America would guarantee their possession to the French Republic.[1]

Such was the position of affairs in the middle of January; —the French government was wavering, and ready to give up all further offensive operations, if they were only permitted to retain Belgium and the Scheldt. They dreaded a contest with their calm and powerful neighbour; but it cost them infinite pain to resolve on observing the necessary conditions of peace. It would be difficult to say which of the two would have been most distasteful to them at this moment—the commencement of a war with England, or the giving up of Belgium. Who knows how long they might have hesitated if they had been left to themselves! But just at this moment a decision was forced upon them, not by foreign Powers, not by the hostility of Kings, but by Parisian factions, and a new victory of the Revolution at home.

We have seen how, since the month of December, the Gironde renounced their old policy of conquest, opposed the condemnation of Louis in the interests of peace with Europe, and proposed the appeal to the People for the sake of the English alliance. Almost all their leaders—Salles and Vergniaud, Valazé and Brissot—were agreed in this course, and regarded Pache and Danton, and consequently all the measures taken against Belgium, with the most violent indignation. Had they retained the upper hand in the great struggle of the King's trial, and once more seized the reins of government, there can be no doubt how the irresolute waverings of the French Ministry would have ended. The freedom of Belgium and peace with England would have been the leading principles of their system.[2]

[1] Protocol of the Cabinet Council, Jan. 14th, 16th, 18th. — [2] That Brissot brought up the report of the Committee on the declaration of the war is

But instead of this, their party was beaten, disorganized, and almost outlawed. The Hôtel de Ville, Pache, Danton and Robespierre, united and full of courage, felt themselves masters of France. Some of these were the originators of the system of plunder pursued in Belgium, and they were all alike convinced that either they themselves, or all the Princes of Europe, must be drowned in the blood of Louis. When these men had attained to power by the desertion of the *Fédérés* and the humiliation of the Convention, it was a matter of course that they resolved to keep possession of Belgium, because she was rich, because she had been conquered by the arms of the Revolution, and, more especially because a king of England protested against her incorporation with France. In this chain of events the sentence of death against Louis was the signal for a general war.

If we consider more closely the part taken in these transactions by the different fractions of the Mountain, and the motives by which they were impelled, we find that Robespierre was chiefly influenced by the feelings expressed by Marat in the words, "We have broken down the bridges behind us!" He had so often declared that the head of Louis must fall, in defiance, and to the destruction, of all tyrants, that he now calmly prepared to meet war as the necessary consequence of preceding events. Though no friend of that aggressive policy which delights in the mere din of war, he was the more easily reconciled to the extension of the field of operations, because England was the new enemy. For of all the nations of the earth, the English were the objects of his greatest aversion; partly, perhaps, because they were regarded with favour by the Gironde, but principally because

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no argument against what we have said. He himself declared shortly afterwards that he had spoken against his own opinion, on behalf of the Committee. The discussion on the *appel au peuple* leaves no doubt of the correctness of this assurance. If the war with Austria was the work of the Gironde, that with England was exclusively the work of the Mountain.

they were so self-dependent, and enjoyed so large a measure of personal freedom.

The others were impelled by the wants and desires already spoken of. They wanted the lands of the Belgian Church as a security for the *assignats*—the Belgian taxes for the Treasury—and Belgian posts and offices for meritorious *Sansculottes*. They represented that it would be disgraceful to give up a single inch of the battle-fields which were soaked with the blood of Frenchmen; and in some quarters the cry was once more raised that France must claim the Rhine as her natural boundary. No one had any regard for the rights of others—especially if they were crowned heads—or for the preservation of the European system, in which they saw nothing but a congeries of insanity and rottenness. Here and there the last sparks gleamed of that enthusiasm with which France, some three years before, had entered on her mission of liberating the world. In short, feelings of every kind were brought into play—honour and meanness, avarice and devotion, fanaticism and love of pleasure. But unhappily for France, while the better feelings still lived in the great mass of the people, the lower impulses predominated in the hearts of their leaders. The few men of higher morality who belonged at that time to the Government, and were able to observe from a nearer point the motives which influenced its important decisions, turned away in disgust. Maret, a man of unblemished character, devoted industry, and keen powers of observation, was able to relate very remarkable things concerning the causes of the English war, which came before him, as one on whom the labours of the Foreign Ministry principally fell. "Great effects," he said, "arise from trifling causes; France might have preserved peace with England without any sacrifice, if the French government had not once for all desired war; and this desire was roused by the fact, that a few dozen influential and conspicuous persons had speculated for a fall in the funds, and consequently

would have been ruined by the continuance of peace. We therefore owe all our misfortunes," says Maret in conclusion, "to the manœuvres of the Stock Exchange."[1] There is no reason whatever to doubt this statement, to which we need only add the remark, that stock-jobbing did not indeed produce the war, but was alas! one of the characteristics of the state of affairs, from which the disorganization of Europe during the Revolution proceeded.

We are justified in presuming that the French Cabinet itself entertained no doubt of the consequences of the King's execution; yet it no longer entered into express discussions on this point, because its own stability was shaken and almost destroyed by the catastrophe of Louis' death. Roland was the first to see the position of affairs in its true light; he comprehended that his party had staked their futurity and lost; and therefore resigned his office, to which no power was any longer attached. Ever since the 11th of January, although he still attended the sittings of the Cabinet, he had refused to put his signature to the minutes;[2] and now he retired into private life, saying, "The bad have gained the victory." Few men had contributed more than he to the fall of Louis; and yet even before Louis' days were ended, Roland looked upon the death of the King as his own ruin. Another vacancy was near at hand at the opposite extreme of the Ministry. As the proportions of the war extended, the more deeply was the incapacity and want of principle of Pache felt, in spite of all his services to the triumphant party. The greatest zealots of the Hôtel de Ville could no

[1] Malmesbury's diary, Aug. 30. 1797; taken down at Lille from Maret's own month. The *Mémoires sur la vie du Duc de Bassano* testify, in accordance with Maret's statements, to England's readiness to make peace; and certainly the Napoleonist Minister is not to be suspected of partiality for Pitt. — [2] Protocol of the Cabinet Council of the 21st: "The undersigned hereby testify that though Roland refused to sign the Protocols, he was present at the meeting and took part in the divisions." Garat, Pache, Mongé, Lebrun.

longer publicly defend him after the Belgian Commissioners of the Convention had established the enormous deficits in the Treasury, consequent upon his administration. His party guaranteed his personal impunity, but it was evident to all that the hours of his Ministry were numbered.

As Roland and Pache were by far the most prominent members of the Council, their retirement virtually produced a complete ministerial crisis. The usual consequences soon appeared in the absence of unity, the one-sided action of individuals, and general feebleness of purpose. It is only by this insecure position of the Cabinet that we can explain an unexpected episode, which occurred at the very last moment before the final decision.

Dumouriez had been more powerfully and deeply shocked by the death of Louis than Roland himself. He had always esteemed the King, had often defended him, and had almost unwillingly deserted him before the overthrow of the throne. Having saved the Republic from the Prussians, he now saw in the fall of the Monarch the victory of his own deadly enemies. Even during the last days of Louis he had taken many steps to avert the final catastrophe; but in this case, as in all others, he found himself completely powerless. He was now half-mad with grief and rage, and probably for the first time in his chequered life, he gazed into a gloomy future without a plan and without a wish. De Maulde found him in this state of mind and exhorted him not to despair of his country. "The rascals," he said, "may triumph for the moment, but the State remains, and calls on us all the more urgently to work for its deliverance." Dumouriez, who was not the man to sigh away life in brooding listlessness, once more took courage, and derived fresh energy from Benoît, who had just returned from London. The latter informed him that Pitt still regarded the preservation of peace as possible, if a more prudent negotiator were sent in the place of the restless and tactless Chauvelin, and that no one appeared to the English Minister better suited for the

post than the conqueror of Belgium himself. In his present mood Dumouriez was greatly excited by this communication. He thought of nothing but the overthrow of the Jacobins, and almost detested his once darling scheme against Holland, because it now formed a part of the political system of the Jacobins. In spite of all that had passed, he determined to do his utmost for the maintenance of peace, and he hastened to the Cabinet to extort from them his appointment to the Embassy in London.

The Ministers must have regarded him with no small astonishment, remembering that no longer ago than the 9th the same man had depicted with equal animation the taking of Flushing and Amsterdam. He met with an unceremonious repulse from Pache, Mongé and Clavière; but when left alone with Lebrun he soon discovered that the latter was becoming more and more uneasy in the sultry atmosphere of European politics, and finally extorted from him permission to make a last attempt. First of all, the recall of Chauvelin was signed on the 23d; then de Maulde was ordered to the Hague, and Maret to London, in order to give preliminary notice of Dumouriez's diplomatic mission. Dumouriez wished to wait for the answer in Antwerp, equally prepared for a journey to England, or a war against Holland. On the 25th he attended a meeting of the Cabinet,—at which they took into consideration the forces at their disposal in case of a naval war—and was highly gratified by the result, which was very favourable to his wishes. In striking contrast with the bombast of the speeches in the Convention, a protocol was drawn up in the retirement of the Council Chamber, at the close of the deliberation, to the effect: that the Mediterranean fleet was reported to have suffered greatly from storms—that the preparations in Brest would not be completed at the prescribed time, and that there was great want of money and provisions; that it was therefore advisable to concentrate all their force on the war by land, and, in case of a naval war, to limit their operations to the defence of the French

colonies. The facts on which these resolutions were based induced the other Ministers at any rate not very vigorously to oppose the negotiation proposed by Dumouriez.

But no one felt any genuine zeal in the cause. Maret, who ought to have started on the 24th, did not leave Paris till the 26th. Even then he was without definite instructions—which Lebrun promised to send after him—and on his arrival in London he found the complication of affairs greatly increased. After the note of the 7th, Pitt had regarded the war as unavoidable, and was confirmed in this opinion, when, on the 17th, Chauvelin with categorical threats demanded his own immediate and public recognition. Pitt looked on this step as proceeding solely from the wish to obtain a somewhat plausible pretext for the proposed breach, and he said to the Lord Chancellor Loughborough, on the 20th: "If the French wish for war, let them begin it, we have money enough, more serviceable vessels than they, and the feeling of the country is more in our favour than ever." Then came the bloody event of Jan. the 21st The effect produced by it in England was as great and general as that of the September massacres; so that Pitt had no hesitation in ridding himself of the dangerous presence of Chauvelin, on the 24th, by sending him his passports. The public mind was filled with so much disgust and abhorrence, that the war against the regicides became henceforward highly popular in England. Pitt nevertheless paused in his course on the arrival of Maret, and in the very first interview with him declared his willingness to treat. News arrived from the Hague of de Maulde's analogous communications. Lord Auckland had sent off three couriers in succession, and agreed with de Maulde in opening the conference with Dumouriez without further delay at Moerdyk. King George too, notwithstanding the hatred which he entertained against the Jacobins, was inclined by his sense of religious duty to leave nothing untried to preserve peace. In short de Maulde, on the 3rd of February, flew to Du-

mouriez at the French head-quarters, with joy and triumph in his heart. Dumouriez received him with tears in his eyes. "The future," he said, "will appreciate the miracle you have performed; the present rejects it—I have received orders to commence the war!"

This decision had been arrived at in Paris immediately after Dumouriez's departure. It was not without good reason that Lebrun had failed to furnish Maret with instructions; every discussion broke down at the same point—the certainty that England would resist the incorporation of Belgium, and that the victorious party in Paris would just as certainly refuse to forego that measure. Yet even the latter would probably have waited to see the result of Dumouriez's embassy, if Pitt had not thought fit to dismiss Chauvelin. The Ministers considered this step as a formal declaration that England considered herself already in a state of war; and the Jacobins could never forgive the insult of daring to blame their most glorious deed—the execution of the King—by breaking off diplomatic relations with them. When Chauvelin arrived in Paris, his personal report by no means tended to allay their indignation. The Council of Ministers immediately called together the diplomatic Committee of the Convention, and an overpowering majority had no other idea than that the war was already present; so that it seemed to them almost a point of honour to get the start of the enemy in the formal declaration of it. A report embodying these views was sent to the Convention, and before their decision—the nature of which no one doubted—was made known, orders to commence hostilities were despatched in every direction. Mongé sent off his instructions for the naval war to all the seaports; and on the 31st Dumouriez received orders to open the attack on Holland with all possible speed. He was directed first to take Venlo and Maestricht, and then to penetrate into the interior as quickly as possible, that he might seize the marine stores in Amsterdam, the Helder, and the other ports, before they were de-

stroyed or damaged. In accordance with the report brought up by Brissot on the 1st of February, the Convention proclaimed war against England and Holland. No opposition was made; no one showed either apprehension or enthusiasm; the decree was passed like any local bill, almost without discussion. Was the Convention so confident of victory? or were they impelled forward by fear of still greater evils? Did they act under the influence of irritated national honour? or did they vote a general war, which was to last for twenty years, in utter indifference to its effects on the public weal? All these feelings no doubt cooperated, but in the main they advanced with eyes blindfolded, because they could no longer stop where they were.

The position of affairs in the interior was very remarkable—a kind of middle state between the old and new *régime*—in which no positive system was laid down—no party predominant—and no authority in full or healthy activity. The rule which the Gironde and the Centre established, after the events of September, had been overthrown by the victory of the Jacobins; and yet, notwithstanding the confusion which prevailed in the ranks of their enemies, the Jacobins were not in a position to take a decided lead, or to form a purely democratic government. They were impeded, as far as we can see, by two obstacles. In the first place, the victors of the 21st, though firmly united in their opposition to Louis and the Gironde, were entirely at variance with one another in their views of the future. Hebert and Chaumette regarded no one with greater veneration than Pache; while Danton looked on him with aversion as having demoralized the army, and Robespierre—though he heartily approved of Pache's proceedings against the Generals—found the power of the Hôtel de Ville somewhat inconvenient to himself. There were, moreover, other decided democrats in the Convention, who in spite of the similarity of their views, regarded the Hôtel de Ville and its leaders with a certain jealousy. In short the party, as a whole, did not even make

the attempt to take direct possession of the government; though we may perhaps regard two acts of the Convention, which took place at this time, as a preparation for doing so. These were, first, the new election of a Police Committee, for the holding of which the Left availed themselves of a thin house on the 22nd, that they might fill this supreme police tribunal with their own adherents; and 2ndly, a declaration that Deputies should not for the future be ineligible for offices of State—since, as a Girondist remarked, the retirement of Roland had removed all danger that the Right should exercise any influence in the appointment of Ministers. The effect of these silently operating differences in the heart of the Mountain itself, was seconded by the attitude of the Centre, which by its very subserviency prevented the Parisian party from dealing the final blow. If the Convention had acquitted Louis, or the Ministry had conceded the evacuation of Belgium to the Maritime Powers, the Hôtel de Ville and the Jacobins would have made a new revolution, and appointed new rulers. As it was, they had no kind of pretext for doing so; and the Communistic Democracy saw itself, *nolens volens* compelled to defer the final *coup d'état* to the next resistance. A considerable time might elapse before this would be offered, since the Centre, under Barére's guidance, was resolved to consent as heretofore to every measure, in order to maintain their partizans in the possession of power, and to swim on the top of the revolutionary stream, no matter in what direction it might bear them.

The most urgent care was for the present to concentrate the military forces for the widely extended war. It was already resolved to send Commissioners of the Convention into the Provinces to take all necessary measures for the public safety. This was at the same time a new step towards the more and more openly professed object of centering all power in the hands of the Convention. The Committees were employed on laws for recruiting and organizing

the army, and the reconstruction of the War Ministry; but no final resolution could be come to as long as the all-important personal question remained undecided. The democrats violently opposed the resignation of Pache, while the Centre exposed with increasing energy the utter worthlessness of his administration. No one could imagine how a further cooperation between him and Dumouriez could any longer exist; and Dumouriez again seemed indispensable for the conduct of the war with Holland. An attempt which the Abbot Sieyès made to render the administration of Belgium independent of Pache, and to entrust it to a Commission with Dumouriez at its head, might perhaps have solved the difficulty, and reconciled even Dumouriez himself to the incorporation of Belgium. But this expedient was opposed both by the Right and Left. For once Salles and Robespierre were agreed; the Gironde and the Mountain joined in warning the Assembly against the ambition of the General, and Sieyès' motion was rejected by a considerable majority.

There was now no longer any choice. The complaints against Pache continued to accumulate; the Belgian Commissioners openly declared from the rostra of the Convention, that 150 millions of expenditure were still unaccounted for; and while the Diplomatic Committee was already discussing a proclamation of war against Spain, the Military Committee received intelligence, that after three months of warlike preparations, the Pyrenean fortresses were still without works, the troops without arms, and the batteries without ammunition. The condition of the other armies was not much better; the number of men had decreased in the last few weeks, through the desertion of the Volunteers alone, by 60,000 men. The democrats were compelled to beat a retreat, and the Centre consented to build golden bridges for them. In the first place, the question of the deficit in the military chest was hushed up; "These accounts of the War Ministry," said Barère, "cannot be unravelled, and we must therefore pass

a sponge over them." In the next place the Mayor of Paris, Chambon, resigned his office, and thus enabled the democrats to bestow on their favourite a position just as lucrative, and almost more important than that of Minister. It was not until the 2nd of February that the Convention decreed the dismissal of Pache, and appointed (by the united votes of the Centre and the Left [1]) Dumouriez's friend General Beurnonville, Minister at War. In spite of all this gilding of the bitter pill, the Convention received a grumbling vote of want of confidence from the *Fédérés*, who sent up a martial deputation to demand a testimony of respect for the esteemed citizen Pache. The Convention appeased them by quashing, two days afterwards, at their request, the proceedings against the September murderers, and allowing them, in the same week, to suppress a theatrical representation, at which they took offence,[2] by murdering the bill-stickers and maltreating the audience.

The democrats had moreover, in the main, every reason to be contented. For the Centre, encouraged by the personal changes in the Ministry, no longer threw any difficulty in the way of reconstructing the army in exact accordance with the wishes of the Parisian party. We shall enumerate the different measures as briefly as possible, because they clearly shew their own character. They began, on the 2nd, to lay the necessary foundation of every armament by issuing *assignats* to the value of 800 millions. They then gave orders to raise 300,000 recruits, thus doubling the existing forces.[3] Every Commune was to allow three days for volunteers to offer themselves, and then to complete its con-

[1] The Gironde voted for Duchatelet. — [2] La chaste Susanne. — [3] Besides the Army of the Pyrenees, which was now being raised, there were at this time no less than eight armies in the field (—of the Coast, of the North, of Belgium, of the Ardennes, of the Moselle, the Rhine, the Alps and the Var), amounting altogether to scarcely 150,000 men. The garrisons in France, the Gensd'armes and the Invalides made up 50,000. Poisson, II. 138.

tingent by election. For this purpose all National Guards from the age of 18 to 40 were to hold themselves in requisition until the required number was completed. France thus received from the hands of the Republic the first law of compulsory service. The compensation for this new loss of freedom consisted in an increase of military licence. Up to this time, the volunteers enrolled since the month of September had served in separate battalions by the side of the troops of the line. They had mostly distinguished themselves by uproarious patriotism and utter want of order; had elected their own officers, and generally agreed ill enough with the regulars. On the motion of Dubois-Crancé, it was now resolved that the troops of the line should be amalgamated with the National Volunteers in mixed semi-brigades, in which two-thirds of the officers—up to the rank of brigadier—were to be appointed by election, and the other third according to seniority, not in rank but in length of service.[1] The mover of this proposition explained the purpose of this arrangement as follows: "The object is to mingle the two kinds of troops, not by changing the volunteers into regulars, but the regulars into volunteers; you must not fear by this change to disorganize the army, for its present condition is disorganization; you are, we know, all ready to grant the soldiers the higher pay of the volunteers, but they also desire their privileges, and only throng to the national battalions for the sake of freedom. You are lost," he concluded with admirable naiveté, "if you do not make all your soldiers volunteers, and yet at the same time proclaim the compulsory service of all citizens." When Isnard depicted the dangerous effects of the elective system on subordination and discipline, he was put down by the remark, that the Aristocrats of all ages had talked about discipline; and St.

[1] So that when the post of major had to be filled up, a non-commissioned officer took precedence of a captain who was younger than himself. St. Cyr reports how, in accordance with this rule, a useless old private became in a few weeks a staff-officer.

Just explained to them—and justly from his point of view—that this measure alone could preserve them from military tyranny. The only point which the Right could carry was, that the amalgamation should not take place until the end of the approaching campaign. Even the Hebertists thought it too hazardous to break up all the existing divisions of the army on the very eve of a great contest.

By these decrees the destruction of the military system aimed at by Pache was legally effected. The Republic prepared to infuse democratic opinions into half a million armed men, and thereby to give the deathstroke to the ancient social system of France, and the independence of Europe. The volunteers of the Belgian army understood the meaning of the new law as well as the new recruits;[1] and both began to act in their quarters as if they were in an enemy's country. They robbed peasants of their horses, demanded luxurious maintenance, filled the camp with crowds of loose women,[2] and laughed at the exhortations of their powerless officers. The rulers in the Convention saw in these proceedings only another bulwark of freedom against the military aristocrats, and had so little doubt of the serviceableness of their soldiers, that on the 14th of February they decreed the incorporation of the Principality of Monaco, and the Bipontine District of Schaumburg—on the ground that France must be extended on every side to her natural boundaries, the Rhine, the Pyrenees and the Alps. Three weeks later, in the midst of the tumult of the impending civil war, commenced the long-prepared attack on Spain. The execution of Louis XVI. had excited a storm of indignation, not only at Court, but far and wide throughout the land, and had suddenly decided the Spanish Government to join

[1] Gorsas, *Courier*, March 23, gives details. Borgnet has a quantity of documentary evidence respecting the Belgian army. — [2] This had arrived at such a pitch in the Spring, that the Convention interfered by a law, intended to secure the means of transport — which these women claimed for themselves — for the military service.

the great European coalition. When, therefore, the French Ambassador, with violent threats, demanded the ratification of the treaty of neutrality which had formerly been offered to him, he received his passports as an answer. Hostilities by sea began at once, and on the 7th of March Barère induced the Convention to declare war against Spain, "in order to overthrow the throne of the Bourbons, and to carry liberty into the beautiful country South of the Pyrenees."

The real position of affairs was every day more and more sharply defined. The dream of universal liberty had vanished. How far removed seemed the time when the lower classes of the people had applauded the abolition of privileges, as the foundation of the legal equality of all citizens! Having once entered on the path of violence, they could now be satisfied with nothing less than the absolute rule of the proletaries over their social superiors. The leaders of the Parisian mob, intoxicated by the blood of the King, forced the French peasants into their service by the decrees of the aimless Convention, that they might lay on the whole of Europe the yoke of their unruly desires. In the face of this furious onset every other consideration gave way for the moment; England and Germany found their whole power engaged in the struggle, and in the East of Europe the Russian lust of conquest had the same free scope as that of France in the West. The death of Louis XVI., by rendering the breach between England and France irremediable, delivered the Poles and the Turks a prey to the ambition of the Empress Catharine.

BOOK VI.

SECOND PARTITION OF POLAND.

CHAPTER I.

EARLY POLICY OF RUSSIA.

MILITARY AND ECCLESIASTICAL CONSTITUTION OF RUSSIA SUBSEQUENTLY TO THE 16TH CENTURY.—CONSEQUENCES OF THE WANT OF PRIVATE PROPERTY.—CHARACTER OF PETER THE GREAT'S REFORMS.—ABOLITION OF THE PRINCIPLE OF LEGITIMACY IN THE SUCCESSION TO THE CROWN.—AGGRESSIVE POLICY.—OLD AND NEW RUSSIANS.—CATHARINE II.—HER PLAN OF CONQUERING POLAND AND TURKEY.—HER OBJECTS, AND THE RELATION OF AUSTRIA AND PRUSSIA TO THEM.—ATTITUDE ASSUMED BY LEOPOLD II. TOWARDS RUSSIA.

DURING the years which intervened between the warlike exploits of Frederick II. and Napoleon, the Empress Catharine II. sat on the throne of Russia. She ruled over this colossal empire for more than 30 years, extended all its frontiers, raised herself to a dominant position in Europe, and maintained a silent, nay a trembling obedience at home. She, a woman, accomplished this, though born in a foreign country and reared in a foreign religion, without possessing a shadow of legal title to the crown, and after having murdered her husband; she did it too, under the very eyes of a son, who alone had any claim to rule. She accomplished all this in a court which she herself filled with shameless immorality, in the midst of a people who regarded her with deep aversion, by means of an army in which she neither inspired, nor placed, the slightest confidence for a single hour. It could be no small talent which made itself a sphere of action under such circumstances; but there was no other country in the world besides Russia, where even the greatest genius for ruling could have accomplished such a task.

When we look for the starting points of modern civilization in the West, our attention is sure to rest upon the

great religious wars, the discovery of the New World, and the revival of classical learning. In Russian history all these are represented by the rule of the Mongols,—who in the 13th century subjected Moscow to their yoke—and the liberation of the country from these barbarians in the 16th century by the Grand Duke of the Kremlin. In these struggles the polity of the old Grand Dukes perished; a polity which, though in many respects *sui generis*, was in the main similar to the contemporaneous institutions of the West, and afforded a prospect of similar progress. But all the germs of this nature were trampled down by a century of Asiatic rule. Nothing remained but petty Lords, who, in humble dependence on the Khans of the Golden Horde, ruled over a population crushed by a double weight. Ecclesiastical independence, strong corporations, intellectual progress—all these life-springs of the West were here utterly unknown.

When at last the Princes of Moscow worked their way to independence out of the ruins of the Mongol Empire, a new era began, which had nothing in common with the past. The new rule, even in the interior of the land, was from the very first one of conquest. A warlike prince who called his companions to horse, rode forth with them to subdue the neighbouring districts, the lords of which he destroyed from the face of the earth (unless they took service in his army), and distributed their lands among his followers under the constant obligation of military service; a government which regarded every acquisition only as a means of further conquest, and allowed no other impulse or thought to arise in the heart of its people but that of war;—such is the picture of the Russian Empire in the time of the German Reformation—in the reign of Elizabeth of England, and Henry of France! We find no trace of the Commonwealth of the Greeks, with its exuberant life, or of the Roman State, based on inflexible laws, or on the rich individuality of the Germans—not a trace, therefore, of the elements of which Western States have been composed. The distribution of lands

among the Bojards did not create an aristocracy, since every fief was only granted in usufruct, and at will, in the same way as among the Osman Timarli. The principle was laid down, that all the property of the subjects was held on condition of service to the Czar in his wars; and the most important of his revenues were not the regular taxes, but the extraordinary exactions. "They are pleased in Moscow," said the English Ambassador, Fletcher, "when the Governors depart for their provinces poor, and return to Court rich, because the Czar in that case takes from them the larger half of their booty; and in the same way, since all property really belongs to the Czar, he exercises the right of preemption in every lucrative branch of trade, and buys and sells at his own price." Since the subject in Russia virtually possessed only so much right as pleased the Czar, the administration of justice was only so far impartial as the Czar required it to be so; otherwise every sentence was publicly bought and sold. We see here a state of things in all respects purely oriental—the old Persian administration—the Turkish military system—and the Mahometan omnipotence of the Caliph.

This is not the only point in which the contrast between the German-Italian nations and the Russians is apparent. The religion as well as the civil policy of the latter points towards Asia. When we consider the effect of Divine Worship on the public life of nations, we may distinguish two fundamental forms of religion in their history. According to the one, religion is simply the Law which God lays down for the world; and, consequently, the Church, as the organ of the Omnipotent will, is the supreme ruling authority, furnished with visible depositories of its power, and armed, like every other dominion, with the right of judging and punishing. This is the prevailing view in the East, on which both Islam and Judaism are entirely founded, and certain elements of which were transferred from these religions into Mediæval Christianity. The other form sees in

religion the inward relation between creature and Creator, the deep personal union between the spirit of man and its original Source, the influx of Divine grace and salvation into the thirsting souls of created beings. The main-spring of the former is the commandment, of the latter the glad tidings—of the former, discipline, of the latter freedom—of the former, the subjection, of the latter, the emancipation, of the individual. The latter is the ground on which the Christianity of the Apostle Paul grew up; on which every reaction of a personal longing after salvation takes its stand against the benumbing influence of ecclesiastical forms. It is the only mode of thought in connexion with which Church life has, at any period, prospered among the Germans; Russia, on the contrary, has never known any other than the Oriental view of religion.

It is true that the Romish Church of the Middle Ages undertook not only to give spiritual life to the individual, but, at the same time, to bring the whole world into subjection. It disciplined the masses of the people, exercised a *surveillance* over the laws of the State, humbled Kings, and made war on infidels with fire and sword, by land and water. But a complete carrying out of this system was rendered impossible in our regions, both by the character of their inhabitants and the force of circumstances. The Church was not strong enough to take complete possession of the secular power; and on the other hand, it was far too strong to allow the Monarchs to assume the position of Heads of the Church. And thus Church and State continued separate under different leaders, and space was found between the two for the growth of independence in the mind of individuals. The union of ecclesiastical and secular power in one hand could alone have rendered despotism complete: but in the West, fortunately for freedom, Emperor and Pope were at feud with one another; while in the East the union of the two powers crushed every germ of original thought.

Russia derived its Christianity from Constantinople, where

for a long period a submissive clergy had done homage to the Emperor as the apostolic and angelic Bishop of foreign affairs. The clergy had from the beginning been dependent on the Grand Dukes; then came the Mongol storm; and the military despotism which subsequently arose subjected the Church of the country as completely as the State, and ruled over the minds of men as absolutely as over their lands. "The Russians," said the Imperial Ambassador, Herberstein, "worship St. Basil, St. Gregory and St. Chrysostom,—allow no sermon to be preached in their churches, because it might contain heresy, and believe and follow every thing which the Czar lays down as the orthodox faith." We know that from that period there has been no developement of Chrisian doctrine, no earnest care of souls, and no inward sense of religion. Here, too, despotism had an innate suspicion against every intellectual movement, and the Jesuit Possevin bitterly complained of the utter want of education: "The man who wished to learn anything," said he, "would become an object of suspicion, and not get off without punishment." Salvation depended on a connexion with the external Church; and this Church followed with blind devotion all the commands, not of a priest, but of a soldier. The Patriarch indeed *governed* the Church but the Czar *ruled* it.

Where the Monarch unites in his own person all the prerogatives of military chief and supreme pontiff over all his subjects, the very idea of personal freedom is entirely excluded. Private property in the German and Roman sense existed only in appearance. An Englishman of the 16th century observed; "The poorest man in our country says of his house, it belongs to God and me; but the noblest Russian says, it belongs to God and the Czar." Nor was this by any means a mere loyal phrase, but an accurate description of the real state of things. "For though there is indeed," explains Fletcher, "a legal distinction between fiefs and hereditary estates—*i. e.* between those lands which are granted by the Czar in usufruct, and those which pass

from father to son as hereditary property—yet these possessions too are subject to civil and military service, and like the former were confiscated when that service was ill performed. In fact no hereditary possessor could prosper without obtaining fiefs from the Czar on condition of service; the dependence of all therefore was equally complete, and the Monarch was virtually the sole possessor of land and people.

This absence of fixed property was found again, under very peculiar circumstances, in a still lower grade—among the peasantry. Under the influence of the Russian form of government, which suppressed every idea of individual rights, the legal *status* of agriculture in Russia remained the same as Cæsar had found existing among the Germans nearly 2,000 years before. The individual had no abiding property in the land, but the Commune distributed it afresh among its members, at suitable intervals.[1] But we find in Russia something else, which was utterly unknown to the early Germans—viz. that every Commune had a Lord, who had the right to sell the Commune together with the land; and that at the head of all these Lords was the Czar, the only real possessor of all the soil in the Empire.

For the political life of Russia this system had the following results. In the lowest class of the people, which was thinly scattered over immeasurable tracts of land, an actually starving *Proletariate* could not easily arise. The Commune provided for the sons as they grew up, as well as it could, either as small farmers, or in some itinerant craft, or in the service of the lord and the Czar. The serfdom of the peasants was not indeed established by law until the reign of the Czar Boris, and received its final completion from Peter the Great; but virtually nothing had existed in the land for many centuries but dependence and vassalage, which had taken so strong a hold on the minds of the people, that a German traveller, in 1557, exclaimed with astonish-

[1] Haxthausen, *Studien.*

ment: "This people takes more delight in slavery than in freedom." It was a common saying, that the Czar was less than God but more than man; the bishops and popes taught that he was the interpreter of God, and that he acted towards his subjects with justice or cruelty, according as they had deserved well or ill of the Almighty. It was however a traditional feature in this State, where one great despot had risen above many small ones, that the Czar was considered as the protector of the poor against the magnates. Even Iwan IV., the bloodiest tyrant perhaps of all ages, was lauded as the father of the common people, and has been handed down as such in tale and song, even to our own times. The title of Patron of the poor, was no less strong a pillar of the Czar's omnipotence, than that of Defender of the faith and of the Church.

The want of property in the land had the same effect on the national character of the Russians, as on that of the ancient Germans and the Asiatic Nomads. It discouraged any strong attachment on the part of the people to their native soil, diffused a feeling of restlessness through the masses, and thus afforded the government the most serviceable weapons for its incessant wars of aggression and conquest. From the long continuance of this system in Russia —nearly a thousand years—its results have been more thoroughly developed in that country than in any other part of the world. It has been observed, that even in the present day, great hordes of people incessantly wander about in this vast empire, that no provincial dialects exist in Russia, and that the Russian loves his country, indeed, but is utterly devoid of the feeling of home.[1] It is impossible to imagine a better material for warlike operations; and the Muscovites had no sooner shaken off the Tartar yoke than they became a burden and a terror to all their neighbours. "The Czar," a prince of Wallachia once exclaimed, "sleeps in his chamber,

[1] Haxthausen.

and yet continually increases his empire." Even when they were at peace for a short time with the Western States, the Russian vassals were at any rate in the field against the Tartars, and the Cossacks took possession of the boundless regions of Siberia. A peace to them was but a truce, and every acquisition only a stepping-stone to further plunder.

These external relations agreed only too well with the law and religion which prevailed in the Russian Empire. Where Church and State are one, the State becomes the armed organ of conversion; and conversely, every war of the State is at the same time an affair of the established Church, and the national faith. The rest of the world is therefore the abode of infidelity and heathenism, and the orthodox Czar and holy Russia are performing a religious duty, when they turn the edge of the sword against the heathen. It was by the diffusion of such ideas that Mahomet roused the Arabians to the conquest of the world, and the Papacy summoned the Western nations to the Crusades. Such a power can never maintain a sincere peace, because it does not acknowledge in its neighbour—who is in its eyes the enemy of God—any capacity for the possesion of rights. It may indeed for a few *decennia* content itself with stealthy and watchful preparations for war; but a real disarmament would be an abnegation of the very principles of its existence, and a forerunner of its own dissolution, as has been seen in the Saracen wars of the Middle Ages, both on the Christian and the Mahometan side.

But we may ask, how could respect for the rights of foreign nations arise in the minds of a people, in whose own land the notion of right was dependent on the will of the Czar? As, on the one hand, every conquering people draws down the weight of despotism upon itself, so, on the other, every despotic ruler is necessarily driven to foreign conquest. And thus throughout the 16th century the vassals and hereditary landowners of Russia were almost incessantly in the saddle,

to exalt the name of their Czar in Europe. Then came the disastrous times when the dynasty of Iwan was dying out—the fall of Boris—the contests of the false Dimitri, and the united attack of the Poles and Swedes. In the midst of these distresses Michael Romanoff mounted the throne and with great difficulty re-established the weakened Empire. No sooner, however, had it secured itself from destruction, than Russia began a new series of wars of conquest, and the Czar Alexei already acknowledged that in the impending contests with the West, his empire would feel the necessity of introducing European modes of warfare. Not long afterwards, Peter the Great, inspired with these hereditary principles, began his mighty career. It is impossible to estimate his energy and sagacity too highly, but we are perhaps inclined to overrate the political importance of the innovations which he carried into effect.

Not long before the accession of Peter, a traveller, who had made a long sojourn in Russia, writes; "This country differs in every respect from the rest of the world, and the Russians are entirely Asiatic, and not in the least European, in their mode of life. Their dress, their festivals, their domestic habits, their polity, and their entire manner of living, partake more of the coarse luxury of Asia than of European civilisation." The external peculiarities here spoken of, Peter I., with restless energy, endeavoured to remove. He employed all the resources of his arbitrary power and unbending will to introduce the social refinement, and the manufacturing industry, of Western Europe into Russia. He succeeded in this up to a certain point; he did not metamorphose the great body of the people, but he made the commencement of a town population, and placed a society formed on the French model at its head. He did not effect much in this way for the general progress of the nation, but he caused a schism in it which most powerfully influenced the course of Russian policy for more than a century.

If we take a general view of his political reforms, in the

proper sense of the words, we shall immediately see that he never sought to undermine the fundamental principles of the Constitution, but on the contrary, amid all the changes which he made, was careful to uphold and strengthen them. His work may be characterised by saying that he still further exalted the Asiatic power of the imperial crown, by regulating and disciplining its resources in the European manner. An army formed on European principles took the place of the tumultuary levy of the vassals; a change by which the former importance of the Bojards was destroyed, and the crown was enabled, without any risk [1] to proclaim the vassals as full owners of their fiefs. The civil government and the administration of justice were put into thorough order; the number of imperial officials was increased, and the control over them rendered more constant and complete. It was of no avail for political freedom that the towns chose their own magistrates, since even in them the Czar had the right of carrying out his will in every particular. The constitution of the village Communes remained untouched, as well as the uncertain mode of cultivating the lands referred to above. The sole change was to empower the lords of the soil, not only to sell the peasants with the land, but to employ them in whatever domestic or manufacturing labour they pleased. But the most important point was, that the union of Church and State was not merely upheld, but rendered still closer. In the place of the Patriarch of Moscow,—the nominal head of the Church—Peter substituted a holy supreme Synod and made himself its president. By this act he publicly assumed the Headship of the Church, in form as well as in reality.

By all these innovations the government was strengthened

[1] Under the Empress Anna, Ukase of the 17th of March 1731. Thenceforward the obligation to furnish recruits took the place of feudal military service. Some fiefs which still existed in Esthonia and Livonia were bestowed on their holders in full possession as *alodia*, in 1783, by a Ukase of May 3. *Vid.* Horne Tooke, *De la Russie*, III. 227 (Edit. Franç.)

without any change in its character. All its peculiar oriental features were preserved intact; there was still the same universal absence of personal rights at home, and the same impulse towards war and conquest in respect to foreign countries. Nay, the structure of arbitrary despotism attained its final completion in the ukase of 1722, which gave the reigning Czar the right of nominating his successor, without any regard to the usual rights of inheritance. We are here reminded of the system of adoption in the old Roman Empire; and, indeed, admirers of the Russian polity have dwelt upon the fact that Trajan and the Antonines attained to power in this manner. But the ecclesiastic position of the Russian potentates, which gave them a greater power over their people than any which the Roman Emperors possessed, again reminds us of the East, where for a long period the successors of the Caliphs were likewise appointed without any regard to blood relationship. Peter therefore placed his law of succession under the protection of the Church as well as of the State, and denounced against every violation of it, not only temporal death, but everlasting damnation.

But as all excess invariably injures the cause it seeks to further, so it was with the newly enhanced power of the Russian monarchy. The notion of legitimacy vanished from the empire of the Czars, as it had done before from that of the Cæsars and the Caliphs. Hitherto the subjects, indeed, had possessed no rights as against their sovereign, but the position of the sovereign himself was regarded as the very essence of all law: but henceforward the succession of the Czars to the throne was independent of the law—the sport of Imperial whims, of Court cabals, and at last of the praetorian guards. Peter had issued this ukase after the execution of his eldest son, that he might raise the Finland peasant, whom he had chosen as his consort, to the throne, in preference to his younger son. From this time forward every succession was the result of a revolution. The descendants of Peter and his brother Iwan alternately expelled one

another; and the horrible saying which was current after the murder of Paul I., that "the Russian constitution is a despotism modified by assassination," may be applied to this whole period. There was henceforward no other source of power in the Empire than brute force.

None had more fatal experience of this truth than the neighbouring States. The progress of despotism at home increased the lust of foreign conquest. We ought, indeed, to distinguish some of Peter's undertakings from the others. There are conquests which, though made in defiance of existing treaties, are indispensable to the attainment of the legitimate objects of the State which makes them; there are others which have no ground but that insatiableness of human nature, which is attached to all irregular desires as their bitterest punishment. Peter began with the former, but was irresistibly impelled by the latter. No one could blame him for endeavouring to obtain an opening for his Empire to the Baltic at the cost of the Swedes, and to the Black Sea at the cost of the Turks: but the unprincipled character of Russian policy was exhibited in all its nakedness, when he filled Poland, his ally, with troops, deliberated on a partition of the country with the Polish king, formed a treacherous party among the Polish nobility, and strengthened all the elements of domestic anarchy in that unhappy land. Wtth the same view he undertook to guarantee the Swedish constitution, that he might have an excuse for preventing all improvement. He then allied himself with the Duke of Holstein, in order to turn that Prince's quarrels with the crown of Denmark to his own purposes. He gained a firm footing in Mecklenburg by another marriage, and at last was only prevented from entirely subjecting that country, by the firmness of England and Prussia. In this violent manner Russia made her first entrance into the field of European politics. Her plans for obtaining absolute sway in Poland, for guiding Sweden according to her will, and for spreading toils around North Germany, were developed in

rapid succession. Peter had even begun to look forward to a domestic revolution in England, which he hoped to produce in a manner exactly in accordance with the principles of the treaty of Tilsit, by an alliance with France. None of these schemes were in any degree necessary to the internal prosperity of Russia: but they were a natural result of the composition of the Imperial constitution, and were, therefore, handed down to all succeeding governments of whatever materials they might be composed.

Under the successors of Peter an uninterrupted civil contest was carried on between the descendants of the old Boyards on the one hand, and the foreign *parvenus* raised by the favour of Peter on the other. We should be doing it too much honour to call this a contest of principles: it is true that in respect of mental progress and social forms, the one party inclined more to the Asiatic past and the other to the European future; but in regard to politics, it was a mere personal question, a struggle for the possession and enjoyment of power. The old Russian party, while they were excluded from the government, made several attempts to limit the power of the crown by aristocratic privileges; but they had no sooner regained their influence, than they professed the doctrine of absolute monarchy with a zeal equal to that of their opponents. Peter's domestic institutions were sometimes more and sometimes less zealously supported; but neither the old Russian nor the European party ever thought of making any change in the army, the established church, or the policy of aggression and conquest. The despot always feels himself outside of his people, and uses them only as means of personal glory or sensual enjoyment. This separation between Monarch and subjects was only increased by the reforms of Peter, which changed the government but left the masses untouched; and it never occurred to any one in St. Petersburg to forego a foreign war out of regard to the sufferings of the people. The new Russians despised the nation which they ruled, and used it without

hesitation as materials of war; the old Russians despised the neighbouring nations, whom they had no scruple in destroying by every means in their power, as infidels and heretics. Both parties had need of military glory—the former that they might flatter the national feeling at any rate in one point,—the latter to prevent the army from falling into the hands of their opponents. Under all circumstances, therefore, the impulse towards boundless conquest remained in full force. The colossal empire was, as it were, ruled by a military colony, divided against itself by deadly antipathy, but always inspired with an impatient desire of overrunning the world with fire and sword.

Under the Empress Anna, who allowed herself to be guided by the new Russian party, the Turks were humbled in the South, and the decided preponderance of the Russian arms over these ancient enemies firmly established. In the North, Courland, hitherto a Polish fief, was completely subjected to the commands of the Russian court, while the Russian armies marched into Poland and out again at pleasure, and decided the succession to the Polish throne without the shadow of a pretext. Somewhat later the Empress Elizabeth restored the old Russian party to power; but nevertheless it was her government under which Russia first appeared as a great Power to decide the internal troubles of Central Europe. Idle, frivolous and dissolute, as this youngest daughter of Peter was, she was not contented with dictating laws to the Swedish Diet through her Ambassador, and fixing her garrisons more and more firmly in Poland. She lived to see the first entrance of Frederick the Great into the field of politics, and her Chancellor, with the instinct of ambition, immediately saw that the consolidation of Northern Germany under Prussia was not advantageous to Russian plans and dreams. Elizabeth, therefore, joined the grand alliance against Frederick, and in the Seven year's war compelled Eastern Prussia, which had only just been occupied, to do homage. This was her personal revenge for some sarcastic remarks

of Frederick on the loose female rule in St. Petersburg; it was the political retaliation for the opposition of Prussia to Peter's plans against the Baltic coast of Germany.

It is well known that the dynasty of Romanoff died out with Elizabeth in 1760, and that the now reigning family of Holstein-Oldenburg was raised to the throne in the person of Peter III. It is known likewise that Peter, according to Russian custom, endeavoured to undo all that his predecessor had accomplished; that he offered the King of Prussia a favourable peace, and regarded him with enthusiastic veneration; while he manifested towards all that was Russian a most supercilious contempt; that he embittered against him the two main pillars of his throne—the Clergy, by seizing on the lands of the Church, and the Army by the preference he shewed to his German Life Guards. In a few months the alienation was so general that it only needed a resolute leader to bring on the catastrophe. This part was assumed by Peter's own consort Catharine. She had come to St. Petersburg as an unknown princess of a petty German State —the sovereign of which derived his chief importance from his position as general in the Prussian army—and had been recommended by the Prussian Court for her docility and good breeding. During her first years in Russia she endeavoured to escape notice; but after she had well reconnoitred the ground on which she stood, and observed the narrow-minded brutality of her husband, the effete indolence of the Empress, and the low cunning of the Ministry, she felt that she was called upon to play the part of mistress. She soon showed that she was not to be diverted from the object of her ambition by womanly, or even humane, feelings. She had been brought up as a Lutheran and received a French education; but when she saw the mighty influence exercised by the Russian clergy, she zealously and publicly made profession of the Greek religion in its most orthodox form. Repulsed by her husband with ever-growing dislike, she assumed the appearance of silent humility and submissiveness;

but neglected no opportunity of attaching Russia to her person, by every possible tie. And thus it came to pass that she, a stranger and a heretic by birth, soon became chief of the old Russian party: and when at last she threw off the mask, she received the homage of the bishops and the guards at St. Petersburg, of the regiments and the popes in the provinces, and of the most energetic and orthodox portion of the population throughout the whole empire. Peter III. fell from his throne without being able to make the slightest resistance, and was strangled by some ambitious friends of his consort. The Grand Duke Paul was passed over in the succession, since it was not exactly from maternal affection that Catharine had incurred the dangers of a revolution.

The same result is observable in all the important events which took place in this country. The notion of legitimacy is absolutely wanting. Force alone is the means for the attainment of right; the temporary possessor of which is then considered as the representative of God, until a new conqueror hurls him back into insignificance.

Never did an intricate course of life conduct a human being more exactly to the position he was calculated to fill, than that which led Catharine to the Russian throne. Her inward consciousness corresponded fully to her imperial power; the vigour of her ideas enabled her to range through the whole of her empire, and its moral corruption was exactly suited to the violence of her passions. Her whole character was made up of contrasts; she was benevolent and pitiless, dissolute and industrious, circumspect and impetuous; but all these contradictory qualities were absorbed by the growth of a colossal, world-embracing, ambition. Almost every one who came within the sphere of her personal influence was irresistibly attracted by her. Her external appearance was extremely engaging; her figure was of middle height, and at a more advanced period of life inclined to corpulence, and her manner was at once graceful and digni-

fied.[1] Her forehead was clear and lofty, her eyes calm and bright, and it was only the lower part of the face which betrayed by its coarser form the strength of her appetites. In the pleasures of the table she was extremely moderate, and in private intercourse full of the most winning cordiality. It is a singular trait in one who murdered her husband and supplanted her son, that she could not live without a troop of little children in her apartments, who were told to call her mother, and whom she herself clothed and taught, and loaded with presents. From the very beginning of her career she showed herself indefatigable in business, sharp-sighted and well-informed. It was observed that she united the carefulness of a woman with the comprehensive glance of a statesman; that she judged of men and circumstances with accurate penetration, and continually furnished her ministers with their guiding principles of action and their most successful projects. But two pernicious impulses—the very worst which can possess the heart of a woman—the love of fame, and an inordinate passion for the other sex, poisoned her whole existence. We shall not repeat the oft-told tale—how her uncontrollable temperament drove her into the arms of one favourite after another—how the heir to the kingdom sprang from her adulterous intercourse—and how nameless enjoyments, and untold treasures, were squandered on low and abandoned men. We might look with astonishment at the inexhaustible strength of a character, which in the depths of this corruption preserved its intellectual activity, were not the remedies of the disease still worse than the malady itself. For there is no doubt that she was saved from perishing in the depths of sensuality, by an excess of a more refined and intellectual voluptuousness—by the delight with which she revelled in ambition and the lust of power. With impetuous eagerness she entered on the inheritance of Peter the Great; and all the schemes of power and war which had arisen in

[1] Malmesbury, I. 534. 539.

his unruly heart, were formed by this woman into a grand, elaborate and enduring system. When we enter into the sphere of her plans of conquest, we feel ourselves once more transported into the East, as we did when considering her debaucheries and extravagance; every thing is on a grand and gigantic scale, rising far above the European standard, and sinking below the level of humanity. Mild and wise as was her rule in her own immediate neighbourhood, it was fearful in its more distant operation. In external affairs she was impeded by no right, and bound by no promise; no means were too abominable for her to use; and while she exchanged panegyrics on freedom and the rights of man with Voltaire, she raised herself to a height of self-deification, at which the submission of two quarters of the globe seemed the only possible pedestal of her glory. As she is, perhaps, the only one of her sex who knew how to play the part of Empress, courtezan and housewife, at the same time, she is also distinguished among the conquerors of the world, by the fact that notwithstanding all the audacious extravagance of her projects, she retained her cautious coolness and reflection to the end of her life. While her glowing fancy carried her wishes beyond all bounds, she always remained in her actions within the limits of what was practically attainable. She had the power of incessantly gratifying and bridling her boundless passions; of revelling in sensuality and ambition to an unexampled degree, and yet of governing without intermission both her court and herself.

Catharine's reign marks the amalgamation of the two contending parties in Russia. She herself belonged to the one by birth, and to the other as the ladder by which she rose to power. She was clever enough to attract and to subdue the more capable men of all opinions; she satisfied some by taking in hand a number of European reforms, and reconciled others by allowing these innovations to fall into decay, after bringing them forward in an ostentatious manner. Her administration began with the same measures as the French

Revolution thirty years afterwards; *viz.* the confiscation of Church property, and the issue of *assignats*. By the former she completed the subjection of the altar to the throne, and the latter furnished her with the necessary means of carrying out all the plans by which she intended to change the character, and to extend the frontiers, of her empire. As her truly royal mind impelled her to guide, to work, and to lead the way in every department, she would have wished to perform memorable deeds at home as well as abroad; but her ambition was only too soon directed—either by the vanity of her own restless heart, or the irresistible tradition of Russian policy—into the more ostentations paths of warlike greatness. The greater number, therefore, of the institutions which she had founded were left in ruins. Of the 240 towns which she ordered to be planned, the majority were wretched villages, some only posts with the name of the future places, and one, a mass of splendid palaces without a single human inhabitant. She commenced canals and hospitals, decreed a new code of laws, and worked at the new organization of the internal administration; but she forgot to carry them out and complete them amid the cares and excitements of the wars, by which, during a whole generation, she disquieted and ruled the policy of Europe. It is not possible even for the most gifted regent to bless a land, which has to serve as the tool for the accomplishment of colossal objects foreign to the real well-being of the State.

The foreign activity of Catharine was directed to two principal objects, the way to which had in some degree been prepared by former potentates, but which she was the first to bring into close connexion, and to follow up on a grander scale as the great ends of Russian policy. These were, the incorporation of Poland, and the annihilation of the Turkish Empire. Since the reign of Peter I., Poland had remained in virtual dependence on the will of Russia; so that it was often said in St. Petersburg, that Europe had long been

accustomed to see Russia alone settle the Polish broils. But before the reign of Catharine the Russian Court had taken no step to destroy the independence which Poland had hitherto enjoyed, at least in name. Both in relation to the great Powers and to the Poles themselves, a vassal King of Poland seemed a most convenient tool of Russian supremacy; —just as a well-known despatch of Count Nesselrode in 1830 describes the advantages which the Russian power in the East derived from the continued existence of the Turkish Sultanship. In the beginning of her government, Catharine herself entertained the same views on this point, but gradually changed them, and formed at last the fixed intention of reducing Poland from dependence into complete subjection, and to reduce the country to a Russian province. This change in her views was not made rapidly or easily, since the former system as well as the latter had its own peculiar advantages. The rule of Russia operated more effectually when Poland became a Russian province; but that rule had more extensive bounds while Poland was a separate but dependent State. Russia was not yet strong enough to undertake the conquest of that country for herself alone, and was therefore obliged to allow the neighbouring German Powers to share in the booty. We shall have an opportunity of observing how deeply Catharine felt this disadvantage; and it is certain that in the various partitions of Poland, she was always the last to make up her mind; and that she could truly say, that she never would have carried out the measure but for the pressure of the German Powers. A partition of Poland, we must remember, appeared to her in a different light from that which it assumed in the eyes of the other nations of Europe, who were not concerned in it. While the latter only saw in this act, the plunder and oppression of an independent people, Catharine looked upon it as the curtailment of a Russian fief, and the cutting off of a Russian province.[1] She consented to it because she was

[1] This disposes once for all of what Smitt (in his two works, *Suwarrow*

obliged to do so, and she consoled herself by looking to the future, and by the increase it brought to Russian power in Europe. We may here make use of the words, which one of the best informed of the Russian Ministers addressed to the Emperor Alexander in 1814;[1] the destruction of Poland, he said, was almost the exclusive subject of modern Russian history; it was undertaken for the purpose of bringing Russia into immediate intercourse with the other nations of Europe, and opening to her a more extended theatre for the employment of her power and her talents, for the gratification of her pride and her passions, and for the advancement of her interests; to frustrate the consequences of this successful plan, would be to attack the unity of the government. It was not so much, therefore, regard to Poland herself, as to the rest of Europe, which decided Catharine's choice. Poland might have been kept in obedience, after Catharine had forced the crown on the head of one of her former favourites—the utterly unprincipled Stanislaus Poniatowski; but in order to use the country as a purchase for the lever with which she might move Germany and Europe, it was necessary to take actual possession of it. There must be no longer any intermediate State between the Russian and the German borders. The Germans might be allowed to take possession for a time of some frontier districts, but there was still the future, in which the loss might be made good. It was exactly in accordance with these views that Alexander —who had broken with Napoleon in 1810 on the question of the independence of Poland—proclaimed, in 1814, the restoration of that country under his own supremacy, and therewith a return to the old system; it was the easiest pretext

und Polens Untergang, and *Frédéric II., Cathérine, et le partage de la Pologne)* has said about the origin of the partition. The first official suggestion came no doubt from Germany, but we are not to conclude that this was the cause of Poland's fall. If that suggestion had not been made, Poland would, it is true, have remained undivided but would have fallen as a whole into Russia's hands.—

[1] *Pozzo di Borgo, Vienna*, Oct. 20.

for recovering a portion of the provinces which had fallen to Germany. We need not point out how his successor renewed the incorporation of Poland, and how accurate the calculations of Catharine have proved.

Catharine's second plan of establishing a Russian throne in Constantinople, was based on equally comprehensive views. The singular mixture of ardent fancy and cool calculation which characterized the Empress, was here brought to light in the most striking manner. The scheme itself was a grand one, the execution of it alike bold and patient; and every step was taken with so much caution, and on such plausible grounds, that the very existence of the plan has often been made a matter of doubt. She laboured in this case as in that of Poland, with a view to future generations—contented to have shown to them the goal, and resigned to the thought that she had prepared the way for others to the darling object which she herself could never reach. This far-seeing repose in a heart glowing with ambition is all the more wonderful, the more clearly she recognized the vast importance of this conquest for the subjection of more than one quarter of the World. Her imperial glance had rested not only on the Danube and Constantinople, but also on Minorca, the Peloponnesus and the shores of the Caspian Sea. We see that the Bosphorus, like the Vistula, were chiefly prized as stages of a still further progress. The two projects were intimately connected with one another, and in their combination formed a mighty system of attack which embraced the whole of Europe. Let us see what attitude the European Powers assumed in the face of the approaching danger.

It was, of course, the two German Powers, Austria and Prussia, who were most immediately affected by the progress of Catharine. Nothing was more favourable to Russia than the fact that these two Powers stood opposed to one another with the bitterest jealousy, and that their views on the Polish question, more especially, were fundamentally different.

Austria felt herself bound to the Poles by all her traditions; while Prussia, on the contrary, had grown to her present power in continual contest with them. The attitude assumed by each in the beginning was in accordance with these different circumstances. Frederick II., to whom Polish Western Prussia was as absolutely necessary as the Baltic ports had formerly been to Peter, immediately allied himself with Russia; while Austria shewed every disposition to oppose the Russian project by force of arms. But in a short time this antagonism was somewhat mitigated. On the one hand, Poland was found to be in a state of such hopeless ruin, that Austria despaired of her preservation; and on the other, Russia threatened the existence of Turkey so seriously, that Frederick began to be anxious about his own independence. Overtures were therefore made in 1770 between Frederick and the young Emperor Joseph; and in 1772 an agreement was come to between the three governments respecting the first partition of Poland, and a limit drawn to the already dominant power of Russia over that country, by the participation of Austria and Prussia. It was Russian regiments, and not Polish, which at that period played the masters in Western Prussia and Galicia, and which, after the partition, made room for the German troops. Though it was no splendid result which was thus attained by the proceedings of 1772, yet in the then existing condition of the world, we may regard it as an unexpectedly favourable one. It was no small gain that only ten years after the Seven years' war, Prussia and Austria, in alliance with one another, should bring the Oriental question to a decision.

Unfortunately the harmony of the German Powers, by which alone Central Europe was protected against the attacks of Russia, was of no long duration. The evils which the restless policy of the Emperor Joseph II. had brought upon Europe, are more perceptible in this connexion than in any other. His unhappy ambition to acquire for himself the inheritance of the Bavarian house of Wittelsbach, caused a

complete revolution in Oriental affairs. It was this which interrupted the good understanding which had been come to with Prussia, in respect to the affairs of Poland; and Joseph hastened to gain the good will of Russia by an unconditional sanction of her warlike plans against Turkey. Catharine shewed the greatest readiness to meet his overtures. She had long ceased to set any value on her alliance with Prussia, ever since King Frederick had shown himself, though not hostile, at any rate independent, in the Polish question; and had briefly expressed his policy, by saying that he was willing to be the friend, but not the slave, of Russia. Whilst Frederick excited the impatience of the Empress by reasonable representations, Joseph obtained her entire affection by flattering all her passions. Catharine now thought him the cleverest and most amiable prince in Europe; while the heir of the Prussian crown, whom Frederick sent to St. Petersburg to support his policy, appeared to her stiff and narrowminded, and drew upon himself her personal dislike for the remainder of his life. In fact Catharine began to hate the King because she was obliged to respect him; she received the long-expected intelligence of his death with joyful satisfaction, and no sooner had she observed the inferior firmness of his successor, than the war of 1788 broke out on the Danube, by which Russia hoped to gain the Bosphorus, and Austria, Belgrade and Munich.

We have already seen, in connexion with German affairs, by what circumstances these plans were frustrated in the moment of their execution: but it will be no unnecessary repetition if we again call to mind the most important points. For the third time in the 18th century, England and Prussia opposed the progress of Russia towards universal power, and for several months Europe stood on the brink of a general war. It was averted by the unexpected death of Joseph II. and the different attitude assumed by his successor Leopold. The latter not only gave up all thoughts of Turkish and Bavarian conquests, and thereby

deprived Catharine of his alliance and cooperation, but no sooner were these disturbances settled, than he sought for Austria a new possession in Northern Europe, which brought him into direct hostility with Russia. He endeavoured to restore the Austrian influence in Poland, took the constitution of the 3rd of May 1791 under his protection, and alarmed Catharine by the prospect of a complete internal restoration of that unhappy country.

By this change in the policy of Austria the previous relations of the other European States were entirely altered. In St. Petersburg men mourned for the death of Joseph II. and could hardly conceal their anger when Austria and Leopold were mentioned.[1] Prussia regarded with ill-concealed jealousy the strengthening of Poland under Austria's protection, but for the moment the danger on the side of Russia appeared far more urgent. She therefore consented to acknowledge the constitution of the 3rd of May, with the view of isolating Russia; and on the 25th of July 1791, she completely gave up the system of Frederick II. and entered into a preliminary treaty of friendship with Austria. It was at this period that the occurrences in France began to press heavily on German politics, and it was generally believed that the alliance of the two German Powers was principally directed against the Revolution. But just as Prussia, on her first entrance into this treaty, had, not France, but Russia in her eye, so Austria declared in September, that the French question was settled by Louis' acceptance of the Constitution. The two Powers had no other object in their alliance than the defence and preservation of the existing state of things. They were entirely agreed in their views respecting France, where they hoped by an imposing display of power to bring back the Jacobins to peace and moderation. As regards Poland, indeed, their secret wishes were greatly at variance. Austria hoped that Poland would

[1] Ssolowjoff, "*der Fall Polens*," p. 263.

acquire lasting consistency under the new Constitution, and be inseparably united with Saxony; Prussia, on the other hand, would gladly have seen Poland free from foreign influence, but internally weak and powerless. This divergence of views however did not for the present lead to any breach. The increasingly warlike spirit of the Jacobins daily gave the friendship of Prussia a higher value in the eyes of Austria; the Emperor, therefore, on the 7th of February 1792, was induced to sign a definitive treaty in entire accordance with the views of Prussia, and to promise his protection, not to the new Constitution of Poland, but to some free Constitution or other. All the European Powers, and more especially Russia, were to be invited to take part in the transaction.

The Empress Catharine received intelligence of these proceedings with ill-concealed rage. It is true that the new treaty condemned Poland to eternal insignificance, but it also placed the tutelage of the ruined State, not in Russian hands alone, but in those of the three Courts in common. To this Catharine was resolved on no account to agree. Towards the Poles themselves she had no other sentiments than wrath and contempt. She heard with suppressed anger of the insults to which her friends in Warsaw were daily exposed on her account, and observed with lively satisfaction the feebleness and incapacity with which the new Polish cabinet entered on the administratron of affairs. As early as May 1791, she gave orders to General Soltikoff to station an army of 42,000 men near Polotzk, and directed Prince Potemkin to hold still larger masses of the Danube army in readiness, as a support.[1] After the conclusion of the truce with the Turks in August, the preparations against Poland were carried on with increased zeal, and on a more extended scale. The chiefs of the fallen party in Poland met with an honourable reception in Russia, and were encouraged by

[1] Miliutin, *Krieg von 1799.*

express promises of support. Every thing was prepared to deal a crushing blow at the constitution of the 3rd of May, and to make Poland bow more humbly than ever before the despotic will of Russia. There was no question of resistance on the part of Poland in her state of indolence and confusion; Catharine's only anxiety arose from the German Powers, and especially from Leopold, who with the greatest frankness and unconcern had recommended his Polish-Saxon plan to her consideration. She wished if possible to prevent them from interfering at all in the Polish question. "Should they oppose my plans," she wrote at this time, "I shall try to appease them by offering them some other compensation, or even a Polish province." This was her intention in the most unfavourable case; for the present, she hoped to amuse them by holding out prospects of this kind, until Poland was once more occupied by Russian armies, and then to decide according to her own arbitrary pleasure. Nothing therefore could be more opportune for her than the warlike tone assumed against Austria by the French in the spring of 1792; for it was certain, that if a great war should break out in Belgium and Italy, the Emperor could only assist the Poles by his good wishes. "I rack my brain," said Catharine to a confidant, "to make the Viennese and Berlin cabinets interfere in the affairs of France. I should like to see their hands full of business, that my own might be free; for I have very many unfinished schemes before me, and Austria and Prussia ought to be fully occupied that they may not hinder me."[1]

Subsequent events, as we have seen, were entirely in accordance with her wishes. The Gironde seized the helm of the State, and urged on the commencement of the war against Germany with passionate eagerness. At Vienna the Emperor Leopold died, and his successor stood inexperienced, undecided and covetous—assailed on either side by the im-

[1] Smitt, *Suwarow*, II. 359.

portunities of Russia and France. The Court of Berlin received intelligence of the plan for uniting Saxony and Poland, and was therefore completely cured of all sympathy for the latter country. Catharine's wishes were fully realized; the two German Powers were otherwise engaged, and were compelled to abandon Poland to the superior force of Russia. The King of Prussia now recurred to the idea which had been previously mooted by Russia, and seeing the impossibility of protecting Poland, he wished at all events not to leave the whole of that country at the disposal of Catharine. The Empress at this time proposed a negotiation with the two Powers on the fate of Poland; and the King resolved to demand a Polish province for himself. He took it for granted that Russia would take no steps against Poland before coming to a final understanding with Germany. But in fact the more evident the wishes of Prussia became, the more zealously did Catharine urge on her warlike preparations, that she might as soon as possible take exclusive possession of Poland, and then, as mistress of the situation, rid herself for ever of the troublesome interference of the Germans.

CHAPTER II.

PARTITION OF POLAND. PRELIMINARIES.

Catharine supports the polish malcontents.—Prussia inclines towards russia.—Catharine proposes a separate treaty to prussia.—Austria makes attempts in st. petersburg to obtain the same.—Conquest of poland by the russians.—Prussian alliance of aug. 7th 1792.—Internal condition of austria under leopold ii, and under francis ii.—Haugwitz's negotiation in vienna.—Proposition that prussia should receive great poland, and austria, bavaria.—Discontent of francis ii.

Since the autumn of 1791 the chiefs of the Polish malcontents had been assembled in St. Petersburg. The most distinguished of those who came from the kingdom of Poland were Felix Potocki and the crown general Rzewuski; from Lithuania, the Brothers Kossakowski—the elder of whom had been Bishop of Wilna, and the younger a general in the Russian service. They met with a splendid reception, because the overthrow of the May constitution must in any case be the first step in the Russian undertaking. Catharine admitted them into her Court circle, gave them a handsome monthly pension, and entered into confidential consultation with them through her Ministers. They abused the wicked democrats of Warsaw, who by abolishing the privileges of the nobility had destroyed the ancient freedom of Poland, and with it the bulwark of political conservatism. They lauded Russia as the refuge of the true old Poland, and as the guardian of legal order; and they claimed her assistance, in the full self-consciousness of irreproachable patriotism. The Empress for some months avoided giving any definite answer, but in the meantime concluded a definitive peace with the Turks at Jassy, and collected a splendid army on the Polish frontier. It was not until the

Gironde had seized the reins of power in Paris, by which the war with Austria was rendered certain, that she threw off her reserve, promised the Polish nobles her armed assistance in restoring the authority of law in Poland (at the same guaranteeing the integrity of the Polish territory), and allowed Potocki to draw the outline of a Confederation, in which he and his adherents were to unite in subjecting Poland to their rule.

At the end of March, Prussia's declaration of the 13th arrived in St. Petersburg, in which she expressed her agreement in Catharine's views respecting Poland, and her readiness to adopt the settlement proposed by the Empress. Prussia explained that she was only prevented from immediately proceeding to action, because, according to the treaty of the 7th of February, she was bound to hear the views of Austria. This was all that Catharine wanted for the moment, it was sufficient to assure her that Poland would receive no aid from Germany. On the 8th of April, therefore, she sent orders to General Kachowski to lead 64,000 men of the army of the Danube—well-disciplined troops, whose valour had been tested in the Turkish war—to the Southern frontiers of Poland. At the same time General Kretschetnikoff began his march from the North and East with 32,000 men towards Lithuania. The superiority of the Russian forces was overwhelming; there were scarcely 50,000 regular soldiers in the whole extent of Poland, and even these were miserably armed, without discipline, and badly paid. Under these circumstances Catharine was not to be turned from her purpose by an Austrian despatch, in which Kaunitz still recommended the union of Poland and Saxony as the best expedient. When once assured of a mutual understanding with Prussia, and of a French war, she paid no further regard to Austria's dissent, and promised herself to make the Court of Vienna pay as dearly as possible for its desertion of Joseph's policy, and its efforts for the restoration of Poland. For the present, she contented herself

with directing her Ambassador in Vienna to assume a cold and proud attitude; and when, soon afterwards, the two German Courts laid their February treaty before her, she refused her adhesion to it, and clearly manifested to Count Goltz her wish to come to a separate understanding with Prussia. In Berlin the King regretted the bitterness of Catharine towards Austria, without which Power nothing could be definitively settled. But he was not the less gratified by the favour shown by the Empress to Goltz, and evinced his feelings by his conduct towards the Poles, drily answering their terrified complaints of the Russian preparations, by saying that the quarrel did not concern him.

Under these circumstances Catharine sent her final instructions to Baron Bulgakow, her Ambassador in Warsaw, on the 30th of April. Kachowski, she informed him, would enter Poland between the 12th and 22nd of May, and at the same time the new Confederation would be proclaimed on the frontiers, under the direction of Felix Potocki. Thereupon Bulgakow himself was to present to the Polish Government the Empress's declaration of war, and was to refuse to enter into any discussion with a view to its modification. The excitement in Warsaw was already very great; the machinations of the Russian party, and the accumulation of troops on all the frontiers, showed that the breach was close at hand, and the prospect violently agitated the hearts of the Poles. There was a talk of doubling all the taxes, raising loans in foreign countries, and a levy *en masse;* but the want of money and mutual distrust prevented any practical or effectual measures. Throughout the whole of Lithuania there were only a few weak garrisons, numbering together about 15,000 men. On the Southern frontier in Podolia, between the Dniester, the Bug and the Dnieper, the young Poniatowski was stationed with 20,000 men, so that the Poles had every where to deal with an enemy of threefold their own strength. Kachowski crossed the frontiers on the 18th of May, and immediately afterwards Felix Potocki, protected

by a Russian division, proclaimed his Confederation at Targowice. Kachowski deployed his forces according to a well-considered plan, continually outflanking his opponent, so that the Poles, fearing to be completely surrounded, hastily evacuated Podolia without a blow. In Volhynia they fought a Russian division near Zielence with great bravery but with no success, and it was not until they had passed the Bug between Dubienka and Brzesc-Litewski that they had time to breathe. As General Kretschetnikoff had at the same time pushed forward with equal vigour, occupied Wilna, proclaimed the new Confederation in that town with great pomp and amidst the shouts of the people, and then forced his way to Grodno, the larger half of Poland was overpowered in about six weeks with scarcely any difficulty.

The political game of the Empress was developed simultaneously with these proceedings in the field. On the 25th of May, her Ambassador Alopeus delivered a note in Berlin, in which Russia held out the prospect of armed assistance against the French, proposed to the Prussian Court a disinterested war of principles against the Revolution, and the conclusion of a separate alliance. The King replied that in the first place, though he did not intend to make a war of conquest against France, he must at any rate claim compensation for his expenses. With regard to the alliance, he expressed the highest satisfaction at the friendly dispositions of the Empress, but declared it necessary previously to communicate with Austria; and he called upon Russia on her part to bring forward a complete draft of the proposed treaty of alliance. He was at that time full of zeal for the war with France, and for the Austrian alliance; he wished to act in concert with Austria even in the Polish question, and to confine the Russian ascendancy within certain bounds; he therefore communicated the offers of Russia, with all possible speed, to the court of Vienna. The intelligence naturally made a strong impression in Austria, which was greatly increased by a confidential communication of Count

Schulenburg, that Prussia looked for compensation in the acquisition of a Polish province; Francis II. was hereby induced to make a great and immediate change in his line of policy. In Leopold's reign, an almost declared enmity had existed between Russia and Austria; but Prince Kaunitz now expressed a wish to renew the old alliance of Joseph and Catharine. While Leopold had made the restoration of Poland his first object, it now occurred to Francis II. that the acquisition of a Polish province would be no less agreeable to him than to Prussia. Kaunitz, however, first attempted to take a step in the direction of the treaty of February; he drew up a declaration in which Austria and Prussia jointly demanded a share in the protection of Poland. But it was just this common guardianship of Poland, in addition to the partition of certain provinces, which would have been most distasteful to Catharine, and she did not deign to make any answer to the proposal. She gathered from it, however, that Austria and Prussia still held together in undiminished harmony, and that she could not succeed in making a separate alliance with Berlin, if she directly repulsed Austria, and did not establish a certain understanding with the Court of Vienna. In Poland, indeed, she would not admit any Austrian influence; in order, therefore, to divert the Emperor's attention from that country, she mooted the Bavarian-Belgian Exchange in Vienna through the agency of Rasumovski. We have seen how the imagination of Francis II. was inflamed by this idea, and that he immediately began to negotiate on the question with Prussia, and how the two Powers came to the preliminary agreement, that the Emperor should receive Bavaria and the King a Polish province. Count Cobenzl hereupon received instructions to propose this plan of compensation in St. Petersburg, and at the same time to open negotiations for a new alliance between the two Imperial Courts. The Russians had scarcely expected that their measures would work so rapidly, and Catharine did not hesitate a moment to make use of

the favourable opportunity. She determined first of all to make sure of Austria. On the 13th of July, a treaty of alliance was signed by Cobenzl and the Russian Ministers, for mutual defence by an auxiliary corps of 12,000 men; which assistance was to be given in all cases except when Austria was attacked from the side of Italy, or Russia by China, Persia, or Tartary. In two special articles, Austria guaranteed the Duchy of Oldenburg to the house of Holstein-Gottorp, and lastly bound herself to join Russia in restoring the old Polish constitution. Austria's desertion of Leopold's policy was thus officially declared, and the Minister Markoff assured the Ambassador that a compensation for the two German Powers would be found according to their wish, although he said the cession of a Polish province to Prussia was a very hazardous step.

The immediate effect of this transaction was felt in Poland. The intelligence of the entrance of Russian troops, and their irresistible advance on all sides, produced an indescribable confusion in Warsaw. It is a characteristic circumstance, that although the raising of an army of 100,000 men had been ordered a year before, and the Russian invasion had been certainly impending for six months, no one, from the very first, believed in the salvation of Poland by her own strength. Though Prussia had so often repeated the declaration, that she was not bound to defend the new constitution, Ignatius Potocki hastened to Berlin at the end of May to claim Prussian aid in virtue of the treaty of 1790. The Abbé Piatoli started for Dresden for the same purpose, and Prince Adam Czartoryski moved heaven and earth in Vienna. All was in vain; whereupon King Stanislaus, resolved on a very remarkable step. On the 22nd of June, he wrote to the Empress and appealed to her personal feelings in the name of their old friendship. "I will speak," he said, "briefly and frankly, for I am speaking to *you*. Read what I say without prejudice, I will speak plainly. It is important to you to have influence in Poland, and to

keep the line of march open for your troops, whether against the Turks or against Europe. It is important to us, to put an end to our endless revolutions, and the constant interference of our neighbours. We need, moreover, a stronger and better regulated government than we have heretofore possessed. There are means of uniting all these advantages. Give us your grandson, the Grand Duke Constantine, as our King; give us likewise an eternal alliance and an advantageous treaty of commerce with Russia. I will say no more; you need no instruction and no guidance." Eight months earlier, this proposal might have met all the wishes of the Russian Cabinet, and would have handed over Poland to Catharine, and spared her the disagreeable cession of a province to Prussia. But she had now gone too far in her negotiations with the German Powers. She saw in the letter of Stanislaus nothing more than an attempt to set her at variance with her allies, and she harshly replied that the only thing which could and would save Poland, was the immediate assent of the King to the Confederation of Targowice. In a circumstantial despatch, the Vice Chancellor Ostermann explained more fully to the King, that no legitimate Polish government existed in Warsaw, and that therefore no proposals of alliance or commercial treaties could be received from that quarter; that Russia was not at war with Poland, but in intimate union with the true Republic, *i. e.* the Confederation, against its domestic enemies.[1] About the same time the Austrian Chargé d'affaires handed in a declaration that his Government had no reason to oppose the wishes of Russia. On the 17th of July Kachowski crossed the Bug at Dubienka, and forced the Polish General Kosciusko, after an heroic resistance, to retire from his strong position to the other side of the river. While the Russian columns were now advancing on the capital from all sides, Stanislaus received the discouraging answer from St. Petersburg, heard

[1] Smitt, *Suwarow*, II. 468.

of the intimate understanding between Russia and Austria, and learned from the Russian Ambassador that Catharine alone prevented the Prussians from a hostile march into Poland. In this country itself, there was nothing but feebleness, strife and confusion—no prospects of aid from any quarter;—the King therefore submitted, and formally declared her adhesion to the Confederation on the 24th.

By this act the overthrow of the new constitution was completed, and the restoration of the old anarchical State proclaimed. The patriots of 1791, Ignatius Potocki, Malachowski, Kollontai, fled to Vienna or Dresden. The King sat deserted and humiliated in his palace, now giving way to violent outbursts of sorrow, and now sunk in gloomy brooding. He was altogether guiltless of the disasters of the last contest; yet all the hatred of the conquered, all the disgrace of the defeat, fell on him, because he had not strength of mind enough to flee with the patriots as Potocki had advised him. He no longer possessed a shadow of power; the conduct of affairs lay exclusively in the hands of the Confederation and its chief, Felix Potocki, who was regarded as Regent of the country. But he and his associates were entirely at the beck of the State-Councillor Bühler, whom Catharine had attached to the Confederation as her Representative. The light in which she regarded her relation to the so-called Republic, may be gathered from the fact that Bühler took the draft of a new Polish constitution with him from St. Petersburg. When the Confederation in Warsaw adopted some measures which were displeasing to the Empress, and grasped too hastily at the dignities and *Starosties* of their fallen opponents, Ostermann wrote to Bühler on the 14th of August as follows: The Empress desires the welfare of the nation, not that of a few individuals. She knows the true interests of Poland better than the members of the Confederation, and will therefore lay down for them a rule of conduct. Experience has shown how liable these gentlemen are to err, when left to their own devices, but the Empress wishes to rest the

tranquility of Poland on a sure basis."[1] We see that the relation between the two countries was no longer that of Suzerain and Vassal; the will of Russia reigned supreme in Poland in every matter, from the smallest to the greatest, and nothing but the name of Poland distinguished it from the other provinces of Russia.

Meanwhile the negotiations with Prussia had made important progress. The draft of an alliance, which had been asked for by the King of Prussia, was despatched from St. Petersburg on the 21st of June. It agreed in the main with the Austrian treaty, but a secret article was added which guaranteed the constitution of 1788 for the Duchy of Courland. This proposal ran entirely parallel with the protection afforded by Russia to the Confederation of Targowice in Poland. The Duke of Courland, like the Polish King, had endeavoured in 1791 to obtain an increase of his prerogatives; and here too there was an opposition party of the nobles which favoured the old anarchy, and had likewise formed a close alliance with Russia. Russia therefore now proposed to the Court of Berlin, that Prussia, which had formerly favoured the Duke, should abandon Courland and its Prince to the Russian party. Catharine on her side, in the note which accompanied the draft, made a considerable step in advance to meet the Prussian plans of conquest. Ostermann repeatedly represented that the German Powers must not aim at the forcible acquisition of French provinces; but in other respects, he said, the Empress was quite of opinion that some compensation was due to them, which she would gladly cooperate in procuring as soon as she had become more intimately acquainted with their plans. The Prussian ministers considered that Catharine, in proclaiming the inviolability of France, could only be thinking of Poland as the source from which their common advantage was to arise; and from this moment they regarded the realization of their

[1] Smitt, II. 489.

hopes as certain. They had only a few unimportant additions and alterations to make in the Russian draft, all of which related to Poland. They demanded that Austria should be mentioned as a fellow-adviser and guarantee of the future state of Poland; and proposed an article, according to which no prince belonging to the three neighbouring empires should ever sit upon the Polish throne. With regard to the compensation, they preferred a written communication, because the meeting between the King and the Emperor was about to take place at Mayence, and they hoped that a final understanding might be come to there. They explained their views, however, to the Russian Ambassador by word of mouth; representing, that as a province of France was not a suitable acquisition for Prussia, and as many inconveniences might arise in that direction for Austria, the Bavarian-Belgian Exchange appeared the best thing for the Emperor, and the seizure of a Polish district for Prussia. In this case Russia might take possession of the Ukraine, so that the ever-fermenting Poland might be confined by narrower frontiers, and France be left undiminished according to the wish of Catharine. Count Goltz was directed to use similar language in St. Petersburg; he was likewise commissioned as much as possible to mitigate the anger of Catharine against Austria, with which Prussia still hoped to come to a thoroughly good understanding, and in union with which she desired to reduce the sole rule of Russia in Poland to more tolerable proportions.

But the Russian Empress had already foreseen this turn in the affair, and was not at all inclined to sanction it. She had apparently lent a willing ear to the wishes of the German Powers, as long as the struggle in Poland continued, and a protest in Berlin or Vienna might bring great danger to Russia. Now, however, at the end of July, she saw Poland at her feet, and the more complete her triumph became, the more she disliked the idea of ceding a province to Prussia. The treaty of alliance, with the Berlin additions,

was signed on the 7th of August, but for a considerable time Goltz heard nothing about the compensation to Prussia, and was at last told that the result of the conference at Mayence must be waited for. Half in joke, Ostermann let fall the observation that the manifesto of the Duke of Brunswick disclaimed all ideas of conquest; to which Goltz replied, that the declaration of that manifesto, that the Powers did not seek to enrich themselves, by no means excluded a fair compensation. Ostermann immediately yielded the point: "You are right," he said, "but mutual explanations are necessary to a mutual understanding." (*Il fallait mieux s'expliquer pour s'entendre.*") Meanwhile the conference at Mayence took place which was followed by the fatal catastrophe, the breach of German unity—the open discord between Austria and Prussia. This unhappy turn of affairs gave a decided superiority to Russian diplomacy in the East, as well as to the French Revolution in the West. From this time forward, Goltz found all doors and all ears closed against him. Russia, he was told, was allied both with Austria and Prussia, and could not come to terms with the one without the consent of the other; that before Prussia made any proposal in St. Petersburg she ought to come to an understanding with her German ally—with the Emperor of Austria. Such a reconciliation was indeed heartily desired in Berlin. Count Haugwitz was sent to Vienna to discuss the points in dispute, but he was not able to advance a single step. Austria adhered to the demand she had made at Mayence of the Franconian Margraviates, and Prussia to her decided refusal. Thus the Autumn passed away, and the campaign in Champagne ended without results; and we have seen how the suspense increased in October, and the crisis came on. On the one side, Austria expressed her wish, not to restore the Bourbons, but to achieve the conquest of French border lands; on the other, Prussia sent a categorical demand first to Russia, and then to Austria, for compensation in Poland for the late campaign, and the promise of further acquisitions

as a reward for the continuance of her warlike toils. Catharine was equally vexed by both demands; but she possessed no ready means of crushing them both at the same time, as such an attempt would lead to the union of the two Courts against Russia: she therefore adhered to the policy of postponement, and repeated her former answer, that the German Powers must first of all come to an agreement with one another. The whole European question, therefore, was centered in that discussion of the note of Merle, which Spielmann and Haugwitz had begun in the Prussian head-quarters. We shall be obliged to go into the particulars of this discussion, because the resolutions, nay, even the humours, of the Emperor, which formed the subject of it, had a decisive weight during the whole period of the Revolution. All the threads on which hung the fates of France, Germany and Poland, are here united. We may therefore break off our account of the Polish question for a moment, for the purpose of enquiring into the state of the Austrian monarchy, and the changes it had undergone since the death of Joseph II.[1]

Although the Emperor Leopold was a man of perfectly clear views, and—with all his pliability—of decided action, yet his reign had been too short to allow of his reconstituting in accordance with his own views the State whose prosperity had received so rude a shock from Joseph. Most of the latter Monarch's innovations were withdrawn, but the old institutions were not all restored, and, in many cases, more suitable reforms were promised. Thus Hungary was appeased, Belgium subjected, and a new government, including representatives of the different Orders, was established in Milan. Yet no firm footing was gained by these means in the hereditary lands, any more than in Belgium. The

[1] The greatest part of what follows is taken from the despatches of the Dutch Minister, van Haeften, and the English Ambassador in Vienna, Sir Alexander Stratton.

effects of the violent measures of Joseph's policy were still continually felt. Leopold endeavoured to decentralize the governing bodies throughout the Empire, and to restore their former aristocratic form; but they did not work well, business dragged on slowly, and Leopold was compelled to call them sharply to account for indolence and disorder. Nay, he was even obliged to appoint two inspectors over the Court Chancery, and to compel them by severe measures to conduct their affairs with punctuality. The Emperor endeavoured to maintain friendly relations with the Church, without however consenting to restore it to its former position. He placed the civil schools once more under the superintendence of the Bishops, but he protected the mixed marriages of the Hungarian Protestants, and refused to restore the monasteries which had been broken up by Joseph. It remained, therefore, to be seen how firmly the government could rest on this most ancient pillar of the Austrian State. The second prop, the army, felt the effects of this sudden change of system still more deeply. In the reign of Joseph, the influence of Field Marshall Laudon had been counteracted on all points by the counsels of General Lascy, in consequence of which a series of important changes, both personal and material, had been made. Under Leopold, the school, or party, of Laudon regained their ascendancy. They ridiculed Lascy's reforms in the commissariat department, and quoted a saying of Frederick II., that the good Lascy required officials at the cost of a million florins, to prevent the waste of a thousand. Leopold did not proceed with so much haste and severity as his predecessor, but the necessity of new changes soon became indisputable. In December 1791, therefore, a commission was appointed to examine the regulations of Joseph, which was nominally presided over by Prince Colloredo, a zealous adherent of Lascy, but really controlled by the energetic General de Vins, a decided Laudonian; so that after a short time Colloredo retired in vexation, prophesying mischief. These differences quickly

made themselves felt among the officers of the whole army, and spread through them to the provincial nobility. The lower classes were hardly better satisfied; for while the noblesse joyfully welcomed the abolition of Joseph's new system of taxation, loud complaints arose from the peasants, who apprehended a return of their former excessive burdens. The provincial Estates had been restored in all the possessions of the crown, likewise to the satisfaction of the noblesse whose influence predominated in them: but the peasants, roused by their pecuniary sufferings, demanded in many quarters a share in the representation. A deputation from Styria made itself especially remarkable. They represented that their class comprised three-fourths of the population, and furnished three-fourths of the recruits and taxes of the whole province; that it was therefore unjust to make them entirely dependent on the remaining fourth, and that it would be but fair to give them some share at least in the representation of the country. This was a most unwelcome demonstration, and the more so because similar movements were reported from Carniola and Bohemia. The government did not like to meddle with the matter and yet could not entirely pass it over. Leopold therefore sent the petition of the Styrians to Count Kollowrath, President of the Austrian Court Chancery, with instructions that this body was not to discuss the matter, but that each of the Councillors, with the greatest secrecy, should send in his opinion to the Emperor in a sealed letter. Among the opinions thus expressed Leopold was most pleased with one which recommended that the peasants should not elect a representative, but that instead of this the so-called *Landes-advocat* (an imperial official in Vienna, whose business it was to lay the complaints of the Emperor's subjects before the central authorities) should be a member of the Diet. Well-founded doubts were, however, entertained whether the peasants would be satisfied with this arrangement; and before any decision was arrived at, other petitions poured in, one from the peasants

of Transylvania, praying for equal representation, and another from the Bohemian Estates, asking for the same privileges which the other provinces possessed. The case was rendered worse by apprehensions of opposition in Hungary —by the smouldering discontent of the Galician nobles, who were nearly breaking out into armed revolt against Joseph—by continued differences with the States of Brabant—and, lastly, by revolutionary intrigues in Vienna itself, where Leopold's active police quickly discovered traces of French envoys—traces which, as we have learned from Lebrun's despatches, were by no means invented by the authorities in Vienna, and which excited the greater apprehension, when taken in connexion with the violent threats of the Gironde.

These cares, however, had but little effect on the external life of the aristocratic and official world which had to bear and digest them as it could. Vienna was as splendid, jovial and seductive as ever. The prudish severity of Maria Theresa had been completely thrown off, and the capricious harshness of Joseph II. entirely forgotten; no one could have dreamt what frightful catastrophes, what boundless exertions, awaited the age and the monarchy. Leopold managed to compensate himself in secret for the toils of government, by the most exquisite enjoyments of every kind; the Court eagerly followed his example, and the ruling classes of the Empire were plunged in the depths of sensuality. Intellectual life had long been at the lowest ebb in the Austrian capital; the moral strength of the higher classes had suffered greatly under Joseph's energetic despotism; and when his control was suddenly withdrawn, they fell into a state of complete collapse. It seemed as if higher politics only existed to secure to each individual the pleasures of the table—to the select circles, their balls and gaming-tables—and to the ladies, a never-ending round of triumphs and enjoyments. The intrigues of the ante-chamber and the bed-chamber regained at Court, and in the various ministerial departments, the decided influence of which they had

been so long deprived. In the Hofburg, in the Kohl Markt, and in the Prater, the most blissful contentment reigned, from which the Emperor alone, perhaps, was startled in anxious hours, when he turned his thoughts to the weakness of his empire—when he thought of Paris and St. Petersburg.

When, therefore, Leopold's sudden death raised the young Emperor Francis to the highest dignity in Christendom, the position of affairs was in all respects a critical one, and by no means well adapted for trying a change of policy. But the young monarch had no comprehensive and well-considered views either of the objects to be aimed at, or of the powers which he possessed. He was an Italian by birth, and had lived to his sixteenth year in Florence. His education was defective, but he was early filled with the consciousness that he should one day reign; so that the Emperor Joseph, who with all his absolute tendencies had a lively sense of duty, was highly dissatisfied with the narrow selfishness of his nephew. He found him destitute of knowledge, stubborn in his claims on others, and incapable of self-control; and he therefore took the education of the youth into his own hands. The general superintendence of his training was entrusted, by a no means fortunate choice, to the High Steward, Count Colloredo, a man of reserved and somewhat melancholy character, who concealed beneath his gravity no very remarkable talents, but a certain watchful slyness. His instruction in military science was undertaken by the Adjutants Lamberti—a very insignificant and indolent person—and Rollin, a man of aspiring ambition, who soon obtained a decided influence over his pupil. The scientific education of the young Archduke was conducted by the Jesuit Diesbach, of whom there is not much to say, and the erudite, somewhat timid, and extremely conceited Professor Schloissnigg. The Archduke was not reported to be possessed of remarkable talents, but the opinion gradually obtained that he would one day restore the policy of Joseph, in contradistinction to that of his father Leopold.

And in fact he prepared to realize these expectations, in spite of all obstacles, a few months after his accession. Not that he was impelled by any grand idea, or attracted by any clearly understood system; for that he was far too ignorant of the condition and affairs of his Empire; and while Joseph seldom arrived at a well founded decision, from excessive haste, Francis was often prevented from gaining the most superficial knowledge of the subject before him, by an indolent dislike of all study. He passed the greater part of his time in harmless but fruitless amusements, in music and dramatic representations, in collecting animals and cultivating flowers; nor were these pursuits ennobled by any artistic or scientific interest, but merely served for the amusement of a sluggish and unoccupied mind. The fact that he left all the labour of government to his Ministers, by no means lessened his idea of his own importance and dignity; on the contrary, the sense of his own weakness not only left the domineering features of his character intact, but rather enhanced them, by the universal distrust with which he incessantly persecuted his associates, his servants, and his allies. It is easy to see that though there was little room in such a soil for Joseph's liberal aims, his tendencies towards absolutism and foreign conquest were sure to be renewed. The impetuous consciousness of power begets a splendid despotism; overweening self-conceit and fear beget a stifling tyranny. Without any clear understanding of the objects at which he aimed, Francis decidedly wished for obedience at home and conquest abroad. He equally disliked the provincial governments, to which his father had restored their former power, and Leopold's pliancy, and readiness to concede, in his foreign policy. But to come forward in the open and noisy manner, in which Joseph to his own injury had done, was not in Francis' nature, which in spite of his youth had never been ardent, and which hid itself in the affectation of dry sincerity, and found a real pleasure in playing a double game. We have seen that he came for-

ward at first with the same peaceful professions towards foreign countries as his father, and concealed the first steps of his plans of conquest behind a public embassy furnished with exactly opposite instructions. In the same way he began his internal administration, by rejecting all secret denunciations, and soon afterwards re-establishing Joseph's system of police in a still severer form. In political matters he used the most confidential language to Kaunitz, and confirmed Cobenzl in his dignities; but he really kept them both at a distance, and entrusted the actual conduct of affairs to his tutor Colloredo. The demands for a popular representation were silenced in all the provinces, but on the other hand, complaints of encroachments on their religious freedom were raised by the Protestants in Hungary. Joseph II.'s system of centralization was completely restored; the Bohemian and Austrian Court-Chancery, the Audit-office, the Hungarian Chamber of Finance, the Ecclesiastical and Educational Committees, were all abolished; and in their stead a General Directory was appointed, for the transaction of all the internal affairs of the German and Hungarian lands, and the financial business of the public treasury.[1] Belgium and Milan alone—but only for the moment—remained exempt from its operations. It was the same system which had existed from 1749 to 1760 under Maria Theresa, and again since 1782 under Joseph II. During both periods it had served as the basis of an aggressive foreign policy,

[1] President, Count Kollowrath. Chancellor, Count Rottenhan, who was commissioned to report personally to the Emperor. Vice-presidents, Count Mailath and Degelmann. General Comptroller, Count Zinzendorf. His deputy, Count Strasoldo. Minister of Education, Baron Birkenstock. Two Councillors each for Bohemia, Galicia, Moravia, Upper and Lower Austria, Central Austria, Fore Austria, and Hungary. Increase of expenditure 20,000 florins. Count Chotek, late President of the Chamber of Finance, is the only official who retired without pension, because he violently opposed the scheme, as he had the new system of taxation under Joseph.

by enabling the government to transact its business and to collect money with greater rapidity; on both occasions it had been laid aside on the adoption of a more peaceful policy, because from the very composition of the Austrian State, centralisation soon led to an excessive accumulation, and a consequent delay, of business. A thorough change of system for the fifth time in fifty years was certainly not advantageous to the conduct of affairs or political morality, but it was on this occasion also, as we know, in perfect accordance with the secret warlike intentions of the Emperor.

The last thing to be looked for under such circumstances, was a clear and consistent policy. The internal condition of the provinces was in no respect consolidated; their governing bodies were unfitted both by the character of their members, and their regulations, for the diligent transaction of business; and the pecuniary resources of the country were in a state of deep and embarassing decline. It was, therefore, little in accordance with the nature of his resources that the mind of the Emperor—prompted more by an anxious jealousy than a bold ambition—was bent upon rapid and one-sided aggrandizement. He entered on a very slippery and intricate path, without any full understanding of the dangers which surrounded him, without any consciousness of his own strength, without any regard to the claims which were sure to be made by his allies. Nay, he had no clear idea of the real and ultimate object of his own wishes; he only desired to get as much as he could for himself, and to give to others as little as possible. This was the only feeling in the heart of the German Emperor, in the midst of the most terrible crisis which ever befell Europe! Thus was it ordained by the Great Ruler of all things. A Revolution which at every step sank deeper in blood and crime, derived its historical, purifying and judicial character, from the fact that in the convulsions it occasioned its opponents thought only of their own selfish objects. While the furious storm with its dashing waves was undermining the protect-

ing dams, the warders were quarrelling about the fragments of the wrecks which drifted towards them!

Prussia, as we have seen, had once more rejected by the note of Merle the Austrian claim to Baireuth; and, on the other hand, had almost doubled her own demand of an increase of territory in Poland. Spielmann, being well acquainted with the Emperor's wishes, was in despair at the gulf which separated them from the views of Prussia. A little consideration convinced him, indeed, that in the face of the increasing danger of a French war, the Emperor had no means of forcing Prussia to make the Franconian cession; and that Belgium might in a short time be deluged by the Revolution, which would render it impossible to exchange it for Bavaria. He therefore quickly made up his mind to a considerable modification of his previous course. He offered to give up his claims on Franconia, if Prussia would cease to make the Bavarian-Belgian Exchange dependent on the free consent of the Elector, and agree to the immediate occupation of Bavaria by a corps of 40,000 Austrians. He represented, that the Elector after his dalliance with the French, deserved no better fate; that the troops might be marched into his territory under the pretext of reinforcing the Army of the Rhine; and that by a surprise of this kind all dangerous opposition might be forestalled. We here see how a single passionate desire sufficed to cloud the judgment, and stifle every moral consideration. How often had Frederick II. declared a close alliance with Bavaria to be one of the first requisites of a sound Prussian policy! And how consistently had he made this principle the centre of all his operations during the first and last ten years of his great career! And now, the mind of his successor was filled with the one desire of acquiring a Polish province; and in his eagerness to gratify this, he forget all other duties, and all other laws: "Let them take Bavaria," he said, "if I do but obtain Posen. The Empress will not let them" (the Austrians), "into Poland, and they must have some-

thing; then let the occupation of Bavaria take place simultaneously with that of Poland." In order to conclude the matter as soon as possible, he determined to send Haugwitz to Vienna with Spielmann, that the former might immediately close with the Emperor, if the latter would direct his ambassador at St. Petersburg to support the demands of Prussia.

When the two Diplomatists arrived in Vienna, at the end of November, the first impression made on Count Haugwitz was by no means unfavourable. Official opinion respecting the war had undergone a sudden and thorough change. Hitherto the saloons had resounded with noisy abuse of Brunswick's want of skill, and eager longings for peace. Now, however, in consequence of a few words which the Emperor had let fall, the aristocratic circles were filled with nothing but compassion for the victims of unavoidable misfortune, and a resolution to take the field in 1793 with redoubled forces. Those 25,000 men, whose non-appearance had had such fatal consequences to the war in Champagne, marched at last from Galicia to Nuremberg, with the Rhine as their ultimate destination. Summonses to come forward in defence of the Empire were despatched to Dresden, Hanover and Munich—the last not in a friendly, but in an all the more emphatic, tone. Lastly, on receipt of the news from Jemappes, an order was issued to place the whole army on a war footing; and it is singular, on the one side, that in spite of the French war this had not been done long before, and on the other, that it was done now, in spite of the extreme scarcity of money. In connection with these vigorous measures it seemed a matter of course for Austria to ally herself as closely as possible with Prussia. Meanwhile another path was opened which might lead to peace. Just at this juncture, the above mentioned English note respecting the eventual conditions of an understanding with France arrived. From this it appeared that England was decidedly opposed to the spoliation of Poland; and thought of setting on foot an armed mediation between France and Germany.

Whatever plan might be preferred, the victorious progress of Dumouriez seemed to render all unnecessary delay extremely dangerous, and a rapid decision desirable.

But the difficulty was, that the Emperor Francis would agree to no peace with France without receiving some accession to his own territory; and at the same time refused the only condition under which a successful war could be carried on. He had, indeed, like Spielmann made up his mind to forego his claim on Anspach and Bayreuth, and to content himself with exchanging Belgium for Bavaria. Unfortunately, however, Belgium had fallen completely into the hands of the French, and until it was recovered, it was impossible to talk to the Elector of Bavaria of an exchange. The Emperor, therefore, apprehended that while Prussia took immediate possession of Posen, he should himself gain nothing but an uncertain, and perhaps altogether delusive, hope; and for this reason he refused to make any cession of land to Prussia without some positive guarantee. He was in the worst possible humour, and dismissed Haugwitz at the first audience after five minutes conversation. Negotiations were then carried on between the Ministers, both by word of mouth and in writing, for eight days without any result; even the Russian Ambassador, who several times joined in the discussion, was unable to move Austria a single step. On the 5th of December the Vice-Chancellor Cobenzl brought forward a definite proposal, which, however, met with the most violent opposition on the part of Prussia. "The Emperor," wrote Cobenzl, "acknowledges the claims of Prussia, but a full understanding with Russia in this affair is above all things necessary: if therefore Prussia shall take possession of her share of Poland before Austria has annexed Bavaria, the Emperor, who will by no means consent to fare worse than Prussia, will likewise occupy an equal portion in Poland." Haugwitz, who was well aware that Catharine would on no account admit the Austrians into Poland, could only see in this demand a source of endless

difficulties. In his reply, therefore, he insisted that Austria should plainly declare her intentions respecting the compensation of Prussia, without any reference to her own desire of Polish territory. To make matters worse, the news from Belgium became more and more discouraging. Dumouriez had occupied Liege, Aix-la-Chapelle, and the line of the Ruhr, and Clerfait already despaired of holding the left bank of the Rhine. But Haugwitz adhered with immovable calmness to his declaration, that Prussia would immediately make peace with France, unless the Emperor allowed him to occupy Posen. The various phases of the question were restlessly discussed in the State Chancery at Vienna. If they satisfied Prussia, it was said, the King would continue in the field, and they might hope with his help to expel the French from Belgium. They would then once more have an object of exchange; and though under present circumstances Prussia would not consent to coerce the Bavarian Elector, yet the Court of Vienna might hope the best from the friendly disposition of Charles Theodore. This Prince had been ready to make the exchange in 1785, why should he not be so now? But there was another point to be considered. Mighty England had hitherto on every occasion expressed her deep dislike of the plan of exchange; her opposition might under all circumstances frustrate the execution of the project; and in spite of the protest of Haugwitz, Cobenzl ordered his London ambassador to inform the British Ministers of the whole scheme of compensation. For the moment, indeed, they were obliged to come to terms without England; for it became more and more absolutely essential to keep the Prussian army on the Rhine. On the 19th of December, therefore, Spielmann gave the decisive answer to Haugwitz; that the Emperor consented to the Prussian acquisition in Poland, and would instruct his ambassador at St. Petersburg to advocate the claims of Prussia before Catharine. Haugwitz was highly delighted; he discussed the particulars of the question with Spielmann during

the following days, obtained sight of the new instructions about to be forwarded to the Austrian ambassador in St. Petersburg, and hastened to inform his Sovereign of the desired result. The news arrived at head-quarters during the celebration of the Christmas festival and excited universal satisfaction. "Haugwitz has managed the affair excellently," cried Manstein, "and achieved the most encouraging result." The King, Bischoffswerder and the others, agreed with him; Lucchesini, ever full of distrust against Austria, alone damped their triumph by a closer consideration of the Austrian instructions. "The Emperor," he said, "in his note of the 5th, still demanded a Polish province for himself, in the event of the failure of the Bavarian exchange. Now the new instructions make express reference to this very note; nay, it literally says, that as Austria's compensation—should the Bavarian plan be unsuccessful—could only be found in Poland, Francis begged the Russian Empress to agree as soon as possible to a treaty for the partition of Poland. According to this," continued the suspicious statesman, "it is clear that the Emperor only gives up the actual occupation of Poland, but not his Polish claims; and as these last will be unconditionally rejected by Catharine, it is to be feared that she will refuse her consent to the whole treaty."

The King had no answer to make to these observations. It was evident, that he still stood on very uncertain ground as regarded Austria. Meanwhile better news arrived from St. Petersburg; Catharine declared herself ready, in case of need, to conclude a treaty even without Austria. The King therefore took no account of the difficulties raised by Lucchesini, and announced to the newly appointed Imperial Commander-in-Chief, Prince Frederick Josiah of Saxe Coburg, that he was now in a position to assist him in drawing up the plan for their joint campaign.

Meanwhile the bitterest feelings prevailed in Vienna. There was not a single Statesman in that city who did not regard

the new arrangements as wrested from Austria by the necessities of war. The Emperor was still of opinion that he had really made no promise which could entitle Prussia to take possession of her new acquisition before himself. On the contrary, he had the decided intention of using every means in his power to deprive his importunate rival of the slightest advantage. Cobenzl wrote in this strain to the Austrian ambassador at St. Petersburg, and instructed him to urge Catharine to limit Prussia's share of Poland to fair proportions, and to promote the rapid fulfilment of Austria's plan of exchange.[1] Colloredo and Rollin were quite of the same opinion; none of them considered the fatal consequences to the revolutionary war which must arise from such a course.

These were the immediate results of the new alliance, into which the German Powers had entered with Russia. In appearance, the number of the enemies of the French Revolution was increased; in reality a selfishness and a confusion were spread throughout Europe, which allowed the Jacobins on the one side, and the Czarina on the other, to carry out their plans unhindered. In appearance, the two German Powers were now joining in a common struggle against the French Republic, and for the extension of their own territory on the Rhine and the Vistula; but in reality, they mutually regarded one another with the bitterest dislike, suspicion and malice. The germ of the subjugation of Germany by the arms of France sprang up in the same moment, and in the same negociation, in which Austria agreed to the Second Partition of Poland.

[1] Ssolowjoff, *Der Fall Polens*, p. 311.

CHAPTER III.

PARTITION OF POLAND. THE TREATY.

Miserable condition of Poland.—Measures taken by the patriots.—French agents.—views of Catharine.—Invasion of the Prussians.—Decision consequent on events in France.—Traaty of partition of Jan. 23d.—England's displeasure at it appeased by the recognition of English laws of neutrality.

At the end of 1792, Poland was governed by the military power of Catharine, and in those districts which her arm did not reach, complete disorder reigned.[1] Since King Stanislaus had given in his adhesion to the Confederation of Targowice, the latter was regarded as the sovereign representative of the nation, and as such had appointed a supreme ruling Court, with the title of Generality, at Brzesc, under the presidency of Felix Potocki. In addition to this a similar Committee was established for Lithuania, which Bishop Kossakowski had formed with the aid of his brother. These two men therefore, Kossakowski and Potocki, represented all that was left of Polish government. They did what every reactionary power does under similar circumstances: they abolished the hitherto existing laws and authorities, promised ample freedom and abundant blessings for the future, and for the present bestowed all power and office on their own adherents. The governing bodies in the towns

[1] For the following description we have consulted (in addition to the published accounts in the Political Journal) Oginski's Memoirs, Ferrand's and Lelewel's Histories, and the M. S. despatches of Buchholtz in Warsaw, and Hogguer in St. Petersburg.

which dated from 1791 were dissolved; and those of their members who belonged to the nobility, and who would have considered themselves degraded by accepting a civic office, were deprived of their political rights. In every *waywodeship* the adherents of the ruling party formed district committees, which assumed all the functions of police and administration. The finances were likewise organized afresh, and the Royal fiscus was separated from the Lithuanian, in order to entrust each of them to a newly appointed commission composed of men who could be relied upon. In a similar manner all the existing courts of law were done away with, and new tribunals formed from partisans of the Confederation. But as even these means did not seem sufficient to secure the power of the party, the Generality reserved to itself the decision on appeals. If we add to this, that whoever wished to exercise any political right, or official function, was obliged to sign a note of unconditional recognition of the Confederation, we shall have before us, in tolerable completeness, the measures by which a minority —inconsiderable in talent, rights and numbers—took possession of every department of the government.

The real support of the ruling party was, we need hardly say, the Russian army, which crushed every symptom of discontent by armed force. The Polish regiments, still numbering about 37,000 men, were dispersed throughout all parts of the kingdom, and surrounded by a superior force of Russians; a large portion of them too were dismissed without reward or pension. The Russians placed the new levies in their own regiments as recruits, subjected the officers to the strict surveillance of the police, and took the arsenals throughout the whole kingdom into their own custody. There was no possibility, therefore, of any further resistance, and the defenceless land had to endure the arbitrary will of its conqueror. In Warsaw the Polish garrison which guarded the palace had to make way for a Russian force. The seat of the real government, the Generality, was removed to Grodno, al-

though the Confederation itself would rather have gone to Warsaw. An order on this head arrived from St. Petersburg at the same time that the negotiations with Prussia produced a definite result; and as the Russians would have had the Generality as completely under military supervision in Warsaw as in Grodno, the motive of the Russian Court was evidently the desire to remove the Polish government as far as possible from the influence of Prussia. Meanwhile the provinces had to provide for the maintenance of their foreign protectors: they had to furnish the daily supply of provisions and forage; and in November supplies for eight months, according to Russian tarifs. The inhabitants soon began to suffer terribly from the laxity of Russian discipline, which allowed the same licence to the brutality of the soldiers, as if they were in an enemy's land. Amid these scenes of misery the Generality sent an embassy of twelve magnates to St. Petersburg, to present to the "immortal" Catharine the thanks of their liberated country. They begged for an alliance based on implicit trust and friendship, were fortunate enough to see the face of the Empress, and received a gracious, but somewhat vague, assurance of her continued protection.

Meanwhile these impotent rulers had hardly agreed with one another for a single day. Incredible as it may seem, Felix Potocki had entered on his unholy task in good faith, and having once secured the privileges of his Order, was really desirous of acting in a mild and respectable manner. He cherished, perhaps, at times the ambitious hope of raising himself to the unenviable throne of King Stanislaus, and he certainly treated him with indecent severity. But in other cases, notwithstanding his great vanity, he manifested neither a persecuting nor a selfish spirit, and on this very account was soon in bitter feud with his principal colleagues. The Crown-General Branicki, a man of equally empty character, was annoyed that Potocki alone was in every body's mouth, and that even the army had received a new uniform on the

pattern of Potocki's coat. Still more decided was the opposition of the Kossakowski's, who in Lithuania extorted money and estates for themselves and their adherents in the most shameless manner; and being supported by secret patrons in St. Petersburg repelled the interference of Potocki and the Generality with scorn. And thus all harmonious action gradually vanished from the new Government, and its discord was greatly increased when Potocki appointed a commission to deliberate on the constitution. Some wished to retain a few fragments of the constitution of 1791, and to alleviate the condition of the burghers and peasants. Others, fearing the loss of their aristocratic power, or their position in the State, demanded with angry fanaticism the entire restoration of the old state of things. In short, foreign despotism and domestic anarchy were displayed in the most glaring colours.

It was natural that the most furious indignation should rage in the hearts of the great mass of the people. The leaders of 1791 had met with a hospitable reception in Vienna and Dresden. The complaints of the land were poured in upon them; and even if they had not themselves been filled with a burning desire of liberation, the grief and anger of their countrymen would have roused them to action. The peasants, indeed, sunk in slavery and barbarism, had no idea of the meaning of a Polish State, and were without any spark of national feeling; but at the present moment they too felt the miseries of war in the shape of hunger and ill-treatment. In the towns, and especially in Warsaw, party feuds were at their greatest height: no patriot would seat himself at the same table with a *Targowician*, who was made to feel the crushing weight of public contempt under the very eyes of the Russian garrison. The ladies, whose voice has always had so much weight in Poland, turned their backs upon them, and sometimes asked the Russian officers why they had marched to the aid of such *canaille*. The Russians, conscious of their own ascendancy, only laughed,

and indemnified themselves by the silent advances which their influence made amidst the excitement of the nation. There was a number of persons, accustomed from their youth to the intervention of the Russians, who preferred submitting to these than to the hated dominion of the Targowicians; and we shall presently see, alas! how soon and how powerfully these sentiments contributed at that time to the universal demoralization of Poland. The anger of the rest of the nation was only increased by the perception of the existence of such feelings among their countrymen. In the mood in which they were, it needed no great persuasion to spread conspiracy through every part of the land. In December there existed in every town in the kingdom secret unions for the liberation of the country, which sprang up only too independently of one another, and with too various internal organizations to allow of their being quickly united in a common enterprise. On this very account they fell more easily under the observation of the police, so that the Generality and the Russians joined in taking every conceivable precaution, and despatched more and more alarming reports to St. Petersburg. But they did not succeed in making any actual discoveries. A Lithuanian nobleman, named Jasinski, one of the most restless of the conspirators, managed all at once, under the eyes of his persecutors, to bring these various unions into close connexion. He published a licentious novel under the title "Extracts from the works of the Chinese Philosopher Good." Every body read the book, but only the initiated learned that it contained a key for their correspondence, and a model for their organization. By this means he succeeded in a very short time in uniting the country in one great league, and at the same time in evading the investigations of the police.[1]

In the spring of 1791 we saw the French Ambassador Descorches engaged in a similar intrigue. The Polish

[1] Lelewel, II, 173.

and Russian governments, being informed of his machinations, had expelled him from the country immediately after the appointment of the Generality; but one of his secretaries De Bonneu was left behind, and effected communications between the conspirators and Paris with no less zeal than the Ambassador himself. We know the far-reaching plans of Lebrun respecting Eastern Europe, and his connexion with Austrian and Hungarian malcontents. Dumouriez too interested himself with all the ardour of his nature for the fate of Poland, and gave De Bonneu the positive assurance that Poland was saved if the French continued to be victorious. Russia felt the palpable results of these operations in December, when a sudden revolt excited by French agents broke out among the Don Cossacks. It was immediately suppressed, and buried in the deepest mystery; but when taken in connexion with a conspiracy of nobles, discovered a short time before in Moscow,[1] it probably contributed to incline Catharine to complete the outrage upon Poland.

Nor was the real state of things altogether unknown to the frontier authorities of Prussia. The activity of the patriots was still greater in Great Poland than elsewhere; since according to the preliminary agreement with Prussia, these Palatinates had remained free from Russian troops, and the Poles, therefore, were able to carry on their operations almost unchecked. The burghers of Posen had already played a great part in the movements which had led to the constitution of the 3rd of May. Their chief Wibycki, a man of wealth, intellect and knowledge, had been intimately connected with Descorches, and still directed the conspiracy against the Russians and the Targowicians.[2] In consequence of the reports on this subject which reached Berlin, Count Goltz, as early as December, proposed to the Court of St. Petersburg that all the Polish regiments should be disarmed.

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[1] In September under Prince Trubetzkoi, and Count Lapuchin. — [2] Memorial of Lucchesini, April 7th, 1794.

But Catharine could not make up her mind to a step which was in fact a declaration of war against the very existence of the Polish State. "It would be difficult for the Empress," said Ostermann to the Prussian ambassador, "to break the promise so solemnly made to the Targowicians." Golz flew out, saying that Russia ought to have thought of that before, and that such scruples at the present moment were tantamount to disloyalty towards his master, to whom Russia had so distinctly promised her aid in the attainment of a compensation. Ostermann endeavoured to pacify him by saying that he was in the right, that he (Ostermann) had only expressed his personal opinion and not that of his Government, and that he had no doubt of a satisfactory result as soon as a declaration arrived from Vienna agreeable to their views. Personally the Russian Minister would have been glad to break off the whole negotiation: he and his friends Bakunin and Woronzow, and the gifted foreign Minister Count Besborodko, were extremely averse to relinquishing to the Germans a single clod of Polish soil, which they had long been accustomed to regard as the property of Russia. Catharine seldom consulted these men on the question. She entrusted the Polish affairs at that time chiefly to the young Suboff, the twelfth of her acknowledged favourites, a thoroughly empty and worthless man, who with little talent but a restless ambition, hoped to make for himself a political career like that of Potemkin. Suboff, again, took the advice of Count Markoff, an official who had risen to notice under Ostermann, and who united to skill and activity an utter untrustworthiness and an old Russian contempt for his fellow-creatures. It was chiefly from jealousy of the Vice Chancellor that he advocated the scheme of partitioning Poland.

Such was the position of affairs in St. Petersburg, when Rasumowski announced from Vienna the commencement of Haugwitz's negotiation. He reported that the acquisition of Bavaria for Austria had been rendered doubtful by Dumou-

riez's victories in Belgium, in consequence of which the Emperor opposed the claims of Prussia, meditated the occupation of a Polish province, and talked of invoking the intervention of England in this important affair. This intelligence roused the Empress from her long-enduring indecision. We have her deliberations on the subject before us, in the minute instructions which she caused to be drawn up at that time for Count Sievers,[1] her newly appointed Ambassador to Warsaw. We clearly see in this document the reluctance with which she gave up the system of keeping Poland as a vassal State. With all the love of an owner for his property she would have defended Poland against the encroachments of the Germans, if this ungrateful country had not itself repelled her powerful protection. "From the beginning of our government," said she, "we have endeavoured to found our relations to Poland on an enduring basis; but the Poles, instead of meeting our advances with corresponding friendliness, have only manifested the bitterest hatred; and thus it came to the first Partition of 1772; our consent to which, as all the initiated know, was only wrested from us by the force of circumstances." She added, that ever since that time she had manifested the same desire to protect the Poles, and had always met with the same aversion; that after the revolution of the 3rd of May she had summoned the Targowicians, and procured for them, their friends and dependents, the dominion over Poland. But she said that she had found even these untrustworthy, selfish, and divided among themselves; that King Stanislaus was continually exciting his people and army against Russia; that the Targowicians complained, that immediately on the withdrawal of the Russian troops a general revolution would break out; and that to crown all, the poison of French doctrines was spreading through the land. It was clear, she concluded, that under these circumstances no improvement was to be

[1] Dec. 22. Given in Smitt, Suwarow, II. 522.

hoped for; and that she could only have in Poland a peaceful and harmless neighbour by reducing it to utter impotence.

We have here the fundamental principles of Catharine's Polish policy. She wished for no partition as long as she saw any possibility of ruling the whole country in a peaceful manner. She did not lend an ear to the Prussian claims until that possibility had been utterly destroyed by the Poles themselves. And even then she hesitated for months, waited and remained inactive, until European events rendered all further evasion impossible. She touches on these in her instructions, but in a far less direct and candid manner. She expressed her fears lest the King of Prussia should take possession of a Polish province without her concurrence, or enter into an understanding with the Polish patriots against Russia. She pointed out the danger that the King might conclude a peace with France, and that then her natural ally, the Roman Emperor, might fall into the greatest difficulties. In reality however resentment against Austria, which only three quarters of a year ago had proposed to her the union of Poland with Saxony, was the liveliest feeling in her heart: and what she feared was, either the return of the Emperor to the same policy, with the powerful aid of England, or the concert of the two German Powers to effect a partition of Poland without Russian cooperation. To avert these dangers, therefore, she resolved to close with Prussia as quickly as possible. This plan too she said had undeniable advantages. "By adopting it, we agree to an act whose whole result is to liberate all Russian lands and cities, peopled or founded by a cognate race, and confessing the same faith with ourselves, from oppression; by uniting them with our empire, we raise them to an equal pitch of glory and prosperity as all our beloved subjects, we hope, enjoy." She sent orders to Count Ostermann to commence negociations with the Prussian Ambassador for a treaty of partition.

On the 16th of December, accordingly, the Russian Minister announced to Count Golz that the long hesitation of the Emperor, and the threatening protest of England, rendered it necessary to lose no more time. He said that Catherine agreed to the acquisition desired by Prussia, and its immediate seizure by the royal troops; that she herself intended to incorporate a corresponding tract of country in the Ukraine. Golz began to breathe freely when he heard the long-wished for words. He was indeed somewhat terrified by the tremendous enlargement of the Russian acquisition: but Prussia was evidently not in a condition to make good any opposition, and the Berlin cabinet by return of post ordered the Ambassador to overlook these scruples, and to proceed to the discussion of the articles of the treaty. The first-fruits of this agreement were seen in a Prussian manifesto of the 6th of January, to the effect that the Jacobin intrigues in Poland, which would be doubly dangerous should the French war continue, compelled Prussia in consideration for her own safety to occupy the frontier lands. This declaration has been condemned, with rare unanimity, as a piece of clumsy hypocrisy; and it is sufficiently evident that the Warsaw clubs were not the primary cause of the partition. But the facts which the manifesto brought forward are not the less true,—viz. that general preparations were going on for a war against Russia and the Targowicians, and that too in league with France, which Prussia could under no circumstances have allowed. This state of things was indeed partly owing to the unfortunate diplomatic mistakes of Prussia herself in the preceding summer; but these could no longer be made good, and fate had to run its course. On the 14th of January Möllendorf crossed the borders with five columns, which entered simultaneously from Silesia, the Neumark, and East Prussia, and cut off the district claimed by Prussia from Poland.

The excitement which this proceeding caused throughout the whole of Europe was tremendous: a cry was raised from

all quarters that a new Partition was on foot, and that an act of such injustice must be prevented at any cost. It was the English government, above all, which gave the most energetic expression to this feeling. Lord Whitworth in St. Petersburg, and Murray at the Prussian head-quarters launched forth into the loudest protests, and the Cabinet of St. James became daily more zealous in their endeavours to preserve peace with France for themselves, and to restore it between Germany and France. For it now appeared evident that the longer the revolutionary war lasted, and the more widely it extended, the freer scope would the Russians gain for their aggressive policy in Eastern Europe. Pitt—whom an inveterate delusion has falsely represented as the real torch of the European conflagration—left no stone unturned at the very last moment to avert the danger from our quarter of the globe. He sent repeated declarations in every direction, that the French ought to be allowed to manage their own internal affairs, and that the Republic ought to be acknowledged, as soon as it gave up all efforts on its part to revolutionize the neighbouring states and to extend its frontiers. He even consented, in order to gain over Austria to his views, to give up an old principle of English policy, that Belgium must always be in the hands of a great military power as a bulwark against France. He promised Austria his consent to the Bavarian-Belgian Exchange, if she would make peace with the French Republic through the mediation of England, and then on her part support the English protest against the partition of Poland. This attitude of the London cabinet naturally excited lively apprehensions at St. Petersburg, and a fresh feeling of irritation against the Emperor who had first drawn the English into the question. In addition to this a great dissatisfaction with Catharine began at this time to shew itself in Sweden. Complaints arrived from Stockholm of the brutality of the Russian ambassador, Stakelberg; there was a talk of collecting troops on the borders of Finland; in short it be-

came known that the Swedish regent strongly inclined towards France. If we consider, lastly, that the French influence continually gained ground in Constantinople, and that fresh reports were continually spread of Turkish armaments, it was impossible for Catharine to conceal from herself that many dangerous elements only needed an energetic leader to combine them against Russia; and we may imagine how deep the importance she would attach to the efforts of England to put an end to the French war.

Thus the interests of the different parties were so strangely and unnaturally complicated, that though Catharine felt nothing but aversion and disgust towards the Parisian regicides, yet their bloody act and its political consequences gave exactly the turn to events which she most desired. We have seen above that the execution of Louis XVI. ensured the victory of the Jacobins and their policy of conquest, and thereby made the breach between England and France irremediable. The last obstacle in Catharine's path was thus removed. The blow which severed the head of Louis XVI. from his body, was at the same time the death stroke of the national existence of Poland. The clouds which had gathered on the Russian horizon round the pacific plans of England were dispersed in a moment. By the certainty of a naval war, the inaction of the Porte was secured. With regard to Sweden, Ostermann now told Lord Whitworth, that if England would seriously interfere the people of Stockholm would soon be brought to reason. Murray still grumbled and scolded when Poland was talked of at Prussian head-quarters, but he no longer raised any formal protest, but at the most declared that England would reimburse herself in the French colonies and islands—to which Lucchesini naturally gave a joyful consent. In short the Russo-Prussian policy gained free scope by the warlike measures of the Jacobins against England.

And thus the negotiation between Ostermann and Golz on the particulars of the treaty of partition continued to be

carried on in the deepest secresy. Prussia had carried her main point—the acquisition of a Polish province—very much against the wishes of Russia; but in other respects Catharine assumed to herself the decision in respect to all the details of the treaty. Every reference which Golz ventured to make to the disproportionate extent of the Russian share was met with dogmatic pride. The whole affair was represented as an act of self-defence, forced upon Catharine by the revolutionary principles which had spread from Paris to Warsaw; and France was designated as the real enemy which was to be opposed by the partition of Poland. Russia accordingly promised to keep her forces, as long as the French war lasted, on the present numerical footing; but she demanded of Prussia a promise far more pregnant of consequences—not to enter into any separate peace with France before the complete suppression of the Revolution. The Prussian Ministers submitted to this, imagining that Austria too would not continue the war longer than was necessary; and they were completely satisfied by a verbal assurance of Ostermann, that this article was really a matter of indifference to the Russian government, and had only been adopted to quiet Austria for the moment. With regard to the Emperor himself and his claims, the two Powers promised one another to consent to the Bavarian-Belgian Exchange, and, if called upon, to afford the Emperor their good services and support as far as possible. Prussia, however, added a distinct declaration, that by the word support, she only meant armed assistance for the reconquest of Belgium, and not compulsory measures against the Elector of Bavaria. The two Powers were to receive homage in their respective Polish provinces before the 21st of April, and they gave a mutual guarantee of their possession against all opponents. They agreed to observe the strictest secrecy in respect to the whole purport of the treaty; and Russia more especially made it a *sine qua non*, that even the Court of Vienna should not be invited to accede to the treaty, or be informed of its

existence, until after the exchange of ratifications, and consequently after the *fait accompli* in Poland. The Prussian Ministers saw in this a final outbreak of Russian anger against the policy of the Emperor Leopold, and deplored beforehand the bitter feelings which such a proceeding must necessarily excite in Vienna. They had, however, no means of resistance, since Catharine made the conclusion of the whole treaty dependent on their acceptance of this one article. And thus the document, so fatal in its consequences, was signed on the 23rd of January 1793.

It contained as we have seen more than one clause well calculated to damp the joy which was felt in Berlin at the new acquisition. What they learned from other quarters respecting the sentiments of the Russian government, by no means opened very splendid prospects to the Prussian allies. While Ostermann was employed in drawing up the treaty of partition with Golz, Suboff assured the Polish Count Oginsky that all reports of a new partition were false, and that Catharine was only thinking how she might strengthen Poland against the enemy in the West. Ostermann also hinted to various members of the diplomatic corps, that Prussia positively demanded three or four Polish Palatinates; that Catharine was strongly opposed to such a transaction; but, beset as she was by numerous cares, she might at last be obliged to yield to Prussian importunity. A distinct desire on the part of Russia was thus manifested to throw all the odium and responsibility of the step on the shoulders of her ally, and while appropriating to herself more than a double share, to represent herself to the European Powers as a reluctant accomplice, and to the Poles themselves as their constant protector against Prussian greed. Even in the last days of January, the State Councillor Markoff told the English Ambassador, that it was impossible to answer for the future, but that for the present no partition would take place. Lord Whitworth, who had no proofs of the contrary to produce, was obliged to rest satisfied.

Such a system of bare denial could not of course be carried on long. No very earnest resistance on the part of England was to be expected after the French declaration of war, and Catharine immediately proceeded to take steps to assure herself of the warm friendship of the British Cabinet. Effectual means of doing this were not wanting. On occasion of the first Partition in 1772, she had granted that country an extremely advantageous treaty of commerce: she was now in a position to offer still more important concessions of a similar kind. Not only was the former treaty not renewed on its expiration, but Catharine, in the year 1780, had raised the most decided opposition to the whole maritime code of England, by the celebrated act of armed neutrality, to which she had hitherto steadily adhered. As the questions connected with it play an important part in the revolutionary war, it will be necessary to recall to our minds its most important provisions.

As war by sea had hitherto always aimed, not only at injuring the hostile State, but at destroying the commerce of the enemy, the question naturally arose, what course was to be pursued with respect to commercial intercourse between the enemy and other, neutral, nations. The theoretical principle may, indeed, be easily deduced from the very idea of neutrality: he who acknowledges another State as neutral, thereby foregoes all claim to stop its commerce even with an enemy. And on the other hand, whoever declares himself neutral, is careful not even indirectly to favour the warlike operations of either party by his commercial transactions. But clear as these two propositions are, when taken generally, they often become very doubtful in their application. In fact disputes have never been wanting concerning the limitation of their meaning; since the neutral States naturally desired the greatest possible freedom of intercourse, and the belligerents desired the greatest possible extension of their repressive measures. There were three questions, especially, which formed constant subjects of discussion. It

was acknowledged that an enemy's property was fair booty, but that a neutral ship was to be respected: but how if the former was found in the latter under the protection of the neutral flag? It was agreed that no neutral might supply either party with the materials of war, or contraband goods: but how far, and to what goods, did this principle extend? It was determined that no neutral could demand free access into a blockaded harbour, any more than into a beleaguered fortress; but what was necessary to entitle a blockade to be regarded as really effectual? It was to the interest of the great Naval Powers, who were usually involved in every war by sea, and might hope to decide its issue—and since the end of the 17th century it had been especially the interest of England—to answer all these questions in favour of the belligerent Powers. A neutral vessel, they maintained, must submit to search and the seizure of all hostile property found upon it; contraband goods were not only arms, but materials for shipbuilding, and warlike implements; a blockade came into existence immediately after it was declared. In fact England had succeeded in gradually gaining from nearly all the European states, and especially from France, the recognition by treaty of these principles.

Now it was these propositions against which Russia protested in 1780, by denying the right of search, by narrowing the definition of contraband goods, and by requiring for an effectual blockade the actual closing of the blockaded place by an armed force. All the Baltic states, together with Austria, joined at that time in this declaration; and though England protested against the Russian statements, she thought it better during the troubles of the American war to abstain from active measures. But now that she was on the threshhold of a new naval contest, it was a vital question both for her warfare and her commerce, whether Russia still adhered to the principles of the armed neutrality or not. Catharine on her part felt at the time but little interest in the question. As the loud tone which she had

assumed against the French Revolution might, at all events nominally, involve her in the war; as Prussia and Austria were already engaged in it, and Holland would take up arms simultaneously with England, the only neutral States which remained were Denmark and Sweden, the latter of which had at this very time displeased her by a manifest leaning towards the French republic. She did not, therefore, hesitate a moment to take the decisive step in favour of England.

On the 6th of February Ostermann sent for Lord Whitworth, and communicated to him a long despatch containing instructions for Count Woronzow, the Russian Ambassador at the English court, which was on the point of being sent off to London. Its chief purport was, that Russia would gladly enter into the league against France, and send auxiliary troops—that she had reason for apprehensions on the side of Turkey and Sweden, and was taking every precaution against those two Powers; that for her own part she gave up all the privileges of the armed neutrality, and left England to act in this respect as she thought fit.[1] After such a concession, Ostermann could unhesitatingly decline the English proposal of an armed mediation between France and Austria, which, moreover, had been divested of all its value by the latest occurrences in Paris. He also promised soon afterwards, that Russia would not only forbid her own subjects to trade with France, but would urge a similar measure in Stockholm and Copenhagen.[2] This whole scheme was completed about the middle of February—*i. e.* before intelligence of the French declaration of war against England was known in St. Petersburg—by an autograph letter of Catharine to Woronzow, in which she empowered him to declare, that if England possessed the means of hindering the partition of Poland, the Empress would not be sorry, as she was being forced into that measure by the

[1] Hogguer, Feb. 6. — [2] Hogguer, Feb. 11th.

King of Prussia; that in any case she would gladly enter into a treaty of alliance and commerce with England, and awaited the proposals of the English Ministry on this head.[1]

At this period General Dumouriez was eagerly pressing forward towards the Dutch frontiers, and France was equipping new fleets in all her arsenals for the struggle with England: in such a position no English Minister could reject the Russian offers for the purpose of maintaining an impotent protest against the Polish partition. On the contrary, Pitt desired to transport a Russian corps by sea from Dantzic to Flanders, and he would have sacrificed more precious things than Poland for the immediate renewal of the commercial treaty. His answer, therefore, was completely affirmative, and offered the immediate conclusion of a formal treaty of alliance. But in this case too Catharine adhered to her tactics of reserve. She had as little intention of entrusting troops against France to Pitt, as to the German Powers: she considered England's silence about Poland was sufficiently paid for by Russia's resignation of the maritime neutrality, and she would only grant an effectual alliance against France, if England would surrender Turkey to the Russian arms. They therefore contented themselves, on the 25th of March, with a preliminary treaty—in which they mutually promised friendship, good offices, curtailment of intercourse with France, and promotion of English commerce—and the announcement of a new negotiation concerning a treaty of alliance.

In this manner Poland lost all prospect of English intercession; in no direction did any obstacle appear to the projected partition. Let us see in what condition the unhappy country now found itself.

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[1] Hogguer, Feb. 25th.

CHAPTER IV.

PARTITION OF POLAND. THE EXECUTION.

EXCITEMENT IN POLAND CAUSED BY THE ENTRANCE OF PRUSSIAN TROOPS.—ARRIVAL OF THE RUSSIAN AMBASSADOR, COUNT SIEVERS.—ANARCHY IN POLAND.—MILITARY OPERATIONS OF THE RUSSIANS.—STUPID INSENSIBILITY OF POLISH PEASANTS.—GERMAN SYMPATHIES IN GREAT POLAND.—IMMORALITY OF THE NOBLES.—WHOLESALE BRIBERY.—RUSSIA INTRIGUES AGAINST PTUSSIA.—OCCUPATION OF THE CEDED PROVINCES.—MERITS AND FAULTS OF PRUSSIAN POLICY.

WHILST the Powers at St. Petersburg were coming to a decision in diplomatic silence, Poland was being agitated by the first shock of the Prussian invasion. Intelligence of the coming event arrived during the last days of the year 1792 from the Polish Ambassador in Berlin, and fell like a thunderbolt upon the Generality at Grodno. Great was the terror and excitement produced. But Catharine had so thoroughly kneaded the Confederation, that its leaders hastened in a body to the Russian commander Igelström, begging that he would help them, place himself at their head, and lead them against those odious Prussians. Igelström, usually no pliant man but proud and domineering in his character, feared by all his subordinates and animated by a thorough contempt for the Poles, entered on this occasion rather deeply into their intrigues. He advised them however to be cautious, since, considering the alliance between Prussia and Russia, Möllendorf would certainly not have made his appearance without the knowledge of the Empress. Potocki then flew into a rage, saying that he would attack the Prussians alone; but he drew upon himself such a sharp rebuke from

Igelström, that he went home and fell ill.[1] Immediately afterwards, the Prussian declaration of the 6th of January, arrived, and the Generality was somewhat calmed by finding in it nothing but their own sentiments of antipathy against the patriotic party of the May Constitution. General Byszewski accordingly, who was stationed in Great Poland with 5,000 Polish troops, received the nugatory order, to defend his country, but to consider the Prussians as friends. But this state of calm did not last long. On the 26th of January, the "Second General of the Crown," General Rzewuski, returned from St. Petersburg—whither he had gone to present the above-mentioned vote of thanks to Catharine—full of the flattering promises of the Empress, and of indignation at the interference of the Prussians. He had always been a hotheaded and unstable man, and in 1772 had so violently opposed the first Partition, that Catharine sent him off to Siberia; he now raved with no less zeal for the deliverance of his country by the high protection of the Russians. He soon succeeded in rousing the Generality to action; protested that Catharine neither knew nor approved of the proceedings of Prussia, and persuaded them to send off two couriers, on the 28th, to St. Petersburg with urgent prayers for help, and orders to Byszewski to hold himself in readiness for war. The storm was redoubled on the following day when the news arrived of Möllendorf's actual entrance into Poland, which had been followed by a few cavalry skirmishes. The Generality in the midst of violent declamations drew up a strong protest, and issued a manifesto to the people, which called on all the nobles to mount. At the same time Rzewuski assigned a regiment of infantry and 26 guns from the Warsaw arsenal as a reinforcement for General Byszewski. But Igelström immediately interposed with the greatest energy. He blocked up the Posen road by two Russian battalions, took possession of the ar-

[1] Buchholz to the King, Jan. 23d.

senal with a strong party of Cossacks, and plainly gave the Confederation to understand, that he would not allow a single man of the Polish army to march to Posen. In spite of all the assurances of Rzewuski it was no longer possible for the understanding between the two Powers to remain unknown at Grodno: Potocki thought of retiring to his estates in despair, and the Generality was on the point of final dissolution. At this juncture the new Russian Ambassador, Jacob von Sievers, arrived.

Catharine had especially chosen this man to carry out her system, according to which she desired—in spite of her own aggrandizement at their expense—to shew herself to the Poles as their friend and protectress. Her object was to attain this end by the mildest possible means, but as far as lay in her power to circumscribe Prussia, and thereby at once to check a disagreeable rival, and recommend herself to the Poles as a trustworthy ally against the hated Germans. In pursuance of this plan Igelström was selected to represent the overwhelming power of Russia—and Sievers, the kindly feeling of the Empress towards the Poles. The latter was a somewhat sickly, but still very stately, old man, whose appearance promised great sincerity. Every expression which fell from him bore the stamp of an extensive knowledge of the world, and a long and active life. His manner afforded a decided contrast to the usual bearing of the Russians at that period, being full of friendliness and delicate tact; to which were joined an extraordinary facility in the despatch of business, and an unfailing readiness of expression.[1] Such a man was well adapted to conciliate alike respect and affection, and to gain at the same time the confidence of the Poles and the Prussian Ambassador, however diametrically they might differ in their wishes. The very air of frankness, which he could so well assume, paved

[1] Word for word according to Buchholz's description given to the King, Feb. 13th.

the way for him. He quickly excited the Generality at Grodno, and made himself completely master of the weak-minded Potocki. He did not conceal from him, that in the miserably complicated state of things, the Republic might perhaps have to make a sacrifice; but he then set before him in so clear a light the beneficent favour of the Great Empress, both towards Poland in general and Potocki in particular, that the latter promised to keep his post and to do all he could to ensure a continuance of such grace and favour. Sievers considered this a great gain, because Catharine wished at any rate to have her share of the country ceded by a formal treaty; and if the Confederation had broken up, Poland would have no organ for the execution of such a contract. Having carried this point, Sievers started for Warsaw—where he arrived on the 10th of February—and immediately entered into close communication with Möllendorf and Buchholz. He exhorted the former to gentleness,[1] and begged him not to insist on the disarming of the Polish troops, as there had already been sufficient noise, and he hoped to induce Stanislaus to remove them to Cracow. He confided to the Ambassador that Russia intended to incorporate the Polish regiments, in her share of the country, with her own army, as soon as ever she had taken possession; and he expressed his surprise that Möllendorf had not already taken similar measures. He then explained the plan of future proceedings which had been drawn up at St. Petersburg. It was to the effect that as soon as the treaty of partition of the 23rd of January had been ratified, the two Powers should take formal possession of their new provinces. Meanwhile the Generality under the presidency of the King, who on this account was to proceed to Grodno,

[1] Characteristic enough is the request of Igelström made on the 30th of Jan. to Möllendorf, not to pay the Polish contractors better than he himself was doing; and a passage in the Ministerial instructions to Möllendorf (Dec. 30) to the effect that the troops should be kept in good discipline, if possible *rather better than that of the Russians!*

were to issue writs for the election of a Diet from which they hoped to obtain a formal act of cession. In the severed provinces, however, no elections were to be allowed, because their inhabitants would have already about this time been compelled to do homage to their new lords. "Moreover," he added, "the Empress does not wish to have too many people to listen to and to pay, but to settle the matter as quickly as possible without useless formalities."

Buchholz could only express his entire agreement, as indeed in all respects he had nothing but what was flattering to report of "the good Ambassador." Sievers manifested a desire to meet the wishes of the Prussians in every way. He immediately extorted from the Generality at Grodno the withdrawal of the decree by which the whole nation was summoned to arms. He informed Buchholz, that the Poles were endeavouring to strengthen themselves in Czenstochau,[1] and thereby led Möllendorf immediately to occupy theplace; in short the harmony between them could not have been more perfect. "We continue," wrote Buchholz on one occasion, "to pull at the same rope." "King Stanislaus," he reported soon afterwards, "has tried to blacken my character to Sievers, but the latter told me every thing, and we are more intimate than ever."

Under such circumstances the Polish State fell more and more into decay. The army, driven to and fro in the land by Prussians and Russians, rapidly melted away; the citizens refused to pay taxes to a government which was no longer able to protect them against foreigners; all the public coffers were as good as empty, and the King himself was no longer able to pay the daily expenses of his court. His position—for which he had partly to blame himself—was in the highest degree pitiable. As he knew only too well that Poland had lost all hope of Prussian support on the 3rd of May, and

[1] He received this intelligence from the Polish Commandant of Warsaw, Ozarowski.

of Austrian support on the 13th of July, he had submitted to Catharine's will in order to induce her at least to guarantee the future inviolability of the Polish frontier. He had not yet received from Sievers any adverse communication, but in his unhappy life he had seen too much of politics to remain in doubt as to the issue. On the 1st of March, he received a letter from his former paramour which was little calculated to quiet his fears; all his past misfortunes, she said, he had brought upon himself by the part he had taken on the 3rd of May; she could not by any means grant him a personal interview, and advised him to trust entirely to the Ambassador; he must, she said, be implicitly obedient, and he should soon learn the particulars of her wishes. These last were soon enough manifested by a second letter received on the 12th of March, in which Catharine, in cold and severe words, instructed him to proceed to Grodno, and to place himself at the head of the Confederation. The effect was increased by an enclosure directed to Felix Potocki, which summoned the latter to St. Petersburg; the Empress, it said, on his arrival there, would show him the interest she took in the personal welfare of himself and his family. The object of this was, to spare the unhappy Potocki, who had been induced to go farther than he wished, the reproaches of the approaching Diet. The Confederation tried to deceive themselves with respect to the meaning of this measure, and commissioned their late chief to offer Catharine a close alliance with Poland.[1] But Stanislaus perfectly understood the case. "The Empress," he cried, "speaks of his person and his family, but never of his country; Poland is lost, the Empress has sacrificed us to the King of Prussia." He almost fell ill with terror and vexation, and obstinately refused to obey the order he had received. He had long and violent interviews with Sievers, and poured out the vials of his wrath on Prussia, which in

[1] *Vid. Moniteur;* April 24, 1793.

1790 had excited him against Russia in order to betray him. "You will see," he cried, "that you too will be betrayed; as soon as I am gone Buchholz will march his regiments to this place under the pretext of some mutiny of his own contriving." When however Sievers took no notice of what he said, the King after brief consideration came to the conclusion that he had done what he could, and must submit to what he could not change. He was actually in want of money for his journey, so that the Ambassadors were obliged to advance it; whereupon on the 19th his departure was fixed for the 4th of April.

Meanwhile the ratified treaty of St. Petersburg, accompanied by a manifesto of the two courts to the Generality, arrived in Warsaw on the 7th of March. The execution of the decisive act was near at hand, and all the preparations for it were being actively carried on. General Kretschetnikow had occupied the Russian share with a large army, and was preparing to wrest the important border fortress of Kaminieck, if necessary by force, from its patriotic commandant Orlowski. And on behalf of Prussia General Raumer led a corps to Dantzic, where the authorities refused with no little obstinacy to deliver up the town. Igelström distributed his troops in that part of the country which was nominally left to the Republic, and above all collected a very imposing force in the neighbourhood of Grodno, partly to prevent the dispersion of the Confederation, and partly to overawe the Diet at a subsequent period. His garrisons, moreover, were scattered through all the chief towns of the districts, the immediate object of which Buchholz explained to Möllendorf in the following words: "General Igelström will carry on the election of deputies to the Diet by means of Russian staff-officers and detachments of troops, who will drive out all those who are not favourable to the matter in hand, and only employ compliant persons; I congratulate your Excellency that you have nothing to do

with this business, which requires special experience not to be gained in other countries."

In addition to these violent measures other worse ones were employed, the responsibility of which falls still more heavily on the conquered than on the conquerors. It may seem harsh to expose the weaknesses of a perishing nation, but historical justice demands that we should not conceal the sins by which a people, once so powerful, drew down destruction upon its own head. The melancholy spectacle of its fall would be more than we could bear, if we were forced to regard it as the work of capricious fate, and not as the consequence of deep and heavy guilt. It will be necessary somewhat to enlarge on this point in order to bring clearly before us the possibility of the events about to be related.

Poland had been labouring for centuries under the curse of serfdom. Nine-tenths of its inhabitants were peasant bondmen, who were exposed without any kind of protection from the law to the arbitrary will of their masters. The old law still existed which valued each of these serfs—in case of murder or manslaughter by a stranger—at ten marks, or according to the value of money at that time about twelve shillings;[1] but the master disposed of the person and property of his serf at pleasure. At the end of the 17th century, when the impulse towards personal freedom and social equality was every where beginning to awake, the tyranny of the nobles in Poland was completely established; it has been remarked, that about the middle of this century the services and dues exacted by the lords of the soil were immoderately increased. The period of compulsory service was raised to four days in the week, and the brutality of the personal relation between lord and serf surpassed all bounds. "The noblemen," wrote a traveller in the year 1781, "abuse

[1] *Vid.* Stanislaus Lescynsky *(Oeuvres du Philos. bienf.*, III. 3) quoted and enlarged upon by Lelewel, II. 294.

every girl as they please, and drive away every person who attempts to resist them, with a hundred blows."[1] George Forster, who had for many years observed them from a near point, made use, in 1791, of the following terrible words concerning them: "The Polish nobility alone in Europe have carried ignorance and barbarism to such a pitch as almost to annihilate in their serfs the last spark of reason."[2] In fact the latter had sunk into a state of poverty and brutal insensibility unknown in the rest of our quarter of the globe. In Great Poland travellers found them only a degree more wretched than in the worst parts of Germany, but still far more tolerably off than in the interior of the country. Here they dwelt in wooden huts plastered with clay; containing a single room, in which men women and cattle lived together; there was no kind of furniture except the great stove, which formed the sleeping place of the whole family, the smoke of which found an issue through the doors and chinks of the building.[3] Their food and clothing corresponded with their dwelling: mental training was of course not to be thought of, and the mechanical skill peculiar to the Sclavonian race was not developed in the wretched monotony of their existence. No one endeavoured to produce any thing, because no one could acquire any thing for himself or his children; the Lord's *Kantschuh* drove them to their work, and behind his back they fell into listless inactivity again. The only pleasure of both men and women was enjoyed in the public house which every Seignior kept up, where, on the Sunday, they forgot the miseries of their life in intoxicating drink, to the sound of the fiddle. They

[1] Bernouilli, IV. 129. — [2] *Ansichten vom Niederrhein*, 1790, I. 377. — [3] *An account of Poland*, Salzburg 1793 (dedicated to Prince Czartoriski) I. 160 et seq. Malmesbury, *Diary* I. 11. No houses, but huts: all the family in one miserable room. The head of it has a sort of mock bed: the rest lie on the floor, and the children that have the advantage to be small enough creep into the oven. The only comfort they seem to enjoy is a thorough plenty of fuel (1767).

had sunk so low, that they had lost every desire of a better condition, every yearning for a more human existence.[1] A case of insubordination among the peasants had been for a hundred years an almost unheard of thing: in none of the many feuds by which the nobility ruined the Polish state, had any political excitement appeared among the people.[2] The same insensibility prevailed even now when the existence of the empire was at stake; how indeed could they acquire either patriotism or public spirit? They knew nothing of the State and never asked who ruled them, since every government only brought them compulsory labour, ill-treatment, and the spirit-tap. It was needs perfectly indifferent to them whether their masters obeyed the head of a Polish Republic, a Russian Empress, or a German King: they might perhaps have desired the last, if the intelligence had reached their huts, that their countrymen in West Prussia and Galicia were ruled with severity indeed, but still like human beings. When we consider this state of things, we can hardly continue to talk of the fall of the Polish nation as a consequence of the Partitions. What *did* fall to the ground in 1793, was the inhuman rule of a few noblemen over the Polish people: the latter only changed masters, and regarded the alteration, which even on the Russian side might bring them as much good as evil, with sluggish indifference.

Of a third class in Poland there is nothing to be said. Besides Warsaw, there were some free or royal towns, in which however trade made very little progress, partly in consequence of bad administration—which, *e. g.* made no arrangements against fire, or for the promotion of cleanliness and health—and partly because it was only during the last

[1] Forster to Lichtenberg, June 18th 1786. Ch. Lee (subsequently an American General) to Charlemont, Jan. 6. 1765. "Were I to call the common people brutes, I should injure the quadruped creation." (From Hardy's Life of Charlemont in Mahon's *Hist. of England*, 1714—1783. VI. 55.) — [2] The only exceptions are the two revolts of the Greek peasants instigated by Russia in 1768 and 1789.

thirty years that a tribunal existed in the country, which received the complaints of a burgher against a nobleman. Most of the so-called towns, however, were in a far worse position, because they were built on the estates of noblemen, and almost as dependent on the Seignior as the peasants themselves. A law passed in 1768, which deprived the Seigniors of the criminal jurisdiction on account of its intolerable abuse, had granted them as a compensation the right of arbitrarily raising the services and dues of the burghers. There was, therefore, no legal protection, no corporative independence, no other occupation than a sluggish and unprofitable agriculture. The only exception to the melancholy rule was found in the districts of Great Poland, the lands bordering on the provinces of North Germany—the very country, in fact, which Prussia was now taking possession of. In this region, as five centuries earlier in Brandenburg and Silesia, German civilization had paved the way for German conquest. A number of German artisans and merchants, allured by a certain market and the absence of competition, had settled in the towns: in some of these there was scarcely a single Polish inhabitant in 1793, and the German language extended to nearly seventy miles into the interior. Without any support from the State, without any mitigation on the part of the Seigniors of their customary oppression, considerable linen and woollen manufactures flourished through German industry. All their interests, of course, pointed towards Germany: trade looked for its channels towards the Baltic harbours, and the sons of the burghers frequently studied at Frankfort or Leipsic. Differences of religion also came into account. In spite of persecution a numerous protestant nobility had maintained themselves in the neighbouring frontier. These were not allowed indeed to take any part in the government, and met with nothing but neglect from the State; but by means of order and economy they attained on their little properties—which they managed themselves—to a degree of prosperity

seldom known in Poland. These families Kalkreuth, Schlichting, Seydlitz, Potworowski &c. were all connected by blood or marriage with the Brandenburg and Silesian nobility, and had no more ardent wish than to form a part of the well-ordered Prussian State.[1]

If we now turn our attention from this politically oppressed portion of the nation to the ruling class—the catholic nobility of Poland—we are immediately struck by the fact that their number was continually on the decrease. It was calculated that at this period a general levy would bring together at the most 150,000 men.[2] This diminution in numbers indicates of itself an internal decline, and closer observation immediately brings to light utter moral and material decay. Most of the estates were heavily mortgaged, and were managed by farmers, who were in fact the mortgagees, and who endeavoured as speedily as possible to extract from the land the amount of their claim. It is evident that under such circumstances the property itself would not be spared, and that the peasants especially would be fleeced in every way. This relation was so common that special forms of law were made to apply to it, and these very often existed through several generations till the debt was liquidated. It was in fact rare for a great landowner to manage his own estates; the majority, like the French nobility at the same period, preferred the court or town life, or travelling, to their home duties, and entrusted the management of their estates—unless the creditor had already taken them in hand—to some poorer nobleman as tenant. The fundamental defect of this system, and the natural consequence of the undeveloped manufactures of the country, was an entire want of capital. Ready money was rare, the rate of interest high,[3] and there was no trace of a reasonable system

[1] Buchholz's *Memoire über Grosspolen*, Feb. 1793. — [2] Lelewel's *Hist. de Pologne*, II. 328. — [3] In 1812 it had risen to 78—80 p. c. *Vid.* De Pradt, *Ambassade à Varsovie.* In 1792 it was 7—8 p. c.

of credit. The few bankers at Warsaw formed a real power which kept the whole nobility in a state of dependence. The fact that a few of them suspended payment in consequence of the Russian occupation in 1792, was lamented as the most disastrous of all the consequences of the war.[1] They lacked, therefore, the material means for a comprehensive and ameliorating management, which looks to the future. In its place they had nothing but the untutored toil of the serfs, who were obliged to cultivate the fields of their lord both by their own labour and that of their horses, according to the national and traditional custom, to the neglect of the land which was allotted to themselves. The produce therefore which accrued to the serf, the lord, and the commonwealth, was miserably small.

The Seigniors indeed, had sufficient means of indemnifying themselves for the deficiency, but this compensation was equally destructive to themselves and the State. Their favorite motto was: *bene nati, bene possessionati*—in other words, as the nobility had all the power of the State in their hands, it was a matter of course that the State should support the nobility. There were two principal courses from which this support was derived—the sale of offices, and the administration of State lands. The consequence of the former was, that every office was regarded and used as a source of income; by which the administration of justice, especially, was completely ruined, and delay, expense and corruption, spread through all the courts from the highest to the lowest. The public domains formed a mass of property valued at from 400 to 600 million Polish florins (fl.=sixpence), and were for the most part granted to needy or favoured noblemen as *Starosties*. The Starost was bound to hand over to the

[1] Oginski, II. 236. The facts which he himself brings forward refute his own opinion of the large amount of ready money in the country, and which he professes to have seen at the festive assemblies of the nobles.

public treasury half or three-quarters of the net produce, according to the term of possession. By this arrangement, the State directly gave away a considerable part of its revenues, and suffered a still further and still greater loss by the deterioration of the lands, which were not of course cultivated with a view to the interests of the owner, but every where so miserably tilled, that the land of a *Starost* might be distinguished at the very first sight from an hereditary estate. The fact that the patriots of 1791 had proceeded to confiscate the *Starosties*, and created a new constitution for the towns, had done more than anything else to envenom the nobles.

And thus the anarchy of the State, which was the offspring of the unbounded licence of the nobility, avenged itself on its originators, by inflicting upon them selfish frivolity and careless extravagance. The tyranny they exercised over their inferiors had a still more terrible effect on the nobles than their freedom from all control from above. It is after all the surest and most righteous punishment of despotism, that it enervates the despot himself by means of his own insolence and evil passions. The prominent feature in the natural character of the Poles, by the side of cunning and courage, was a temperament of the liveliest excitability, which made them equally sensible to good and bad impressions. In the midst of all their corruption, the Poles retained a capacity for the most burning enthusiasm; but they had nevertheless imbibed with eager thirst the poison of a consuming immorality. As children they had grown up amidst hundreds of degraded wretches who were subject to every whim of their master.[1] In the Jesuit schools, in which the generation of that period had still been educated, they had learned mechanical exercises of devotion, an elegant handwriting, barbarous latin, and nothing else. When they

[1] Malmesbury's *Diary*, I, 26. "Prince Czartoriski's *personal* servants amounted to 375. The number in his country house is infinitely greater,"

entered into the stream of life and the world, they had for the most part imbibed the frivolity of French radicalism, which afforded them theoretical instruction in that love of pleasure and of self, in the practice of which they had been so terribly schooled by their own government and in their own homes. They still kept up their old reputation for unruly courage and inexhaustible cunning, and no nation possessed in an equal degree personal tact, skill in the use of language, gallantry, and the rapid acquisition of superficial knowledge. But nowhere did their education penetrate so deeply as to form the character, bridle the passions, or regulate the moral conduct. A well-ordered economy was as rare among individuals as in the public treasury; disgusting uncleanliness existed side by side with princely magnificence; splendid toilets were covered with vermin, and at the most sumptuous festivals the use of pocket-handkerchiefs was an unknown luxury.[1] Where the lower classes drank ardent spirits, the higher drank Tokay; drinking was not a more favourite occupation than gambling, in which both men and women engaged with most passionate phrensy. Their social intercourse was free from all formal trammels, without stiffness or restraint: so that the foreigner—especially the German traveller—was at first highly charmed. But in this case too, freedom degenerated into unbridled licence, and the tone of aristocratic society showed terrible marks of the influence of serfdom. In Poland as everywhere else, slavery, which degrades human beings to the level of the brute, destroys in the masters the very core of all morality—the feeling of shame. The intercourse between the sexes was not regulated by any wholesome forms, because the feelings of both parties were destitute of modesty and reserve. The girls married to become their own mistresses, and nothing was easier or more customary than the divorce of the marriage tie.[2] One might associate for years with a lady

[1] Forster to Therese Heyne, Jan. 24, 1785. — [2] Forster to Therese Heyne, Jan. 22nd 1785.

without knowing whether she was separated from her husband, or how many husbands she had had before the present one.[1] We may be allowed to pourtray the darkest feature in this picture in the words of the royal physician Lafontaine. It is disagreeable to speak of such things, but it is only by a knowledge of them that we can understand the fall of the Polish Empire. He says: "*Unter unsern Krankheitsfällen verhält sich die Lustseuche gegen die sonstigen Uebel wie sechs zu zehn; unter hundert Rekruten waren in Warschau voriges Jahr achtzig angesteckt, und häufig habe ich junge Mädchen von zwei, drei und mehreren Jahren von angeborenen Leiden dieser Art ergriffen gesehen; wer das Uebel nicht durch eigene Schuld bekommt, der hat es entweder ererbt, oder durch die Amme erhalten, von welchen man unter zwanzig gewiss fünfzehn mit diesem Uebel Behaftete rechnen kann.*"

Is it necessary to describe the various departments of a State ruled by such men as these?—to reproduce the same spectacle of dissolution and decay in the departments of law and finance, in civil and military administration,—to set before the reader the ever-recurring demoralization, violence and selfishness in actual examples? The ruling classes in Poland were full of zeal to fight for the Republic, and most of them were ready to die for their country; but very few were willing to sacrifice their indolence and inconstancy, their interests and enjoyments, to the public weal. Can we wonder that the nobleman, broken in fortune, health and morals, should alternately regard his powerful neighbours with narrow-minded contempt, and submit to them with selfish subserviency; that the burgher should look on the German conquest with pleasure, and the peasant regard even the establishment of Russian dominion with indifference? Or is it strange that the Seignior, who during his whole life had sold to the burghers his judicial sentences, and the Official,

[1] *Nachrichten aus Polen*, I. 100.

who had always regarded the State solely as a source of wealth, should now sell his vote to the agents of Russia?

The reports of the statesmen entrusted with the execution of the second partition of Poland have left not the slightest doubt that bribery played as great a part in this transaction as violence.[1] Sievers, who every where played the first part as a matter of course, chose to take the lead even in these discreditable operations. Those with whom he had first to deal were the leaders of the Confederation, who moreover had for years received salaries from Russia. After the departure of Potocki the most important person was General Kossakowski, who though a paid tool in the service of Russia was highly indignant when he heard of the participation of Prussia. He confessed to Sievers that he had just intended to make an inroad into East Prussia from the side of Lithuania, but he was quick in taking a hint, and received his instructions for the future. Care was taken at the same time that King Stanislaus should only have thoroughly initiated and trustworthy persons about him; the word was passed through all the electoral bodies, that submission to Catharine's arrangement would bring the most splendid advantages. It is melancholy to add that the effect produced was immense. "In the provincial Diet," wrote Igelström, "the petty nobility turned the scale, and they carry on a trade with their votes; they are bought at 10, 15 or at most 30 ducats." Sievers sent word to St. Petersburg that in his opinion a Diet had never gone cheaper; that in the whole of Lithuania the average price of a Deputy was only 200 ducats, and that in Poland he should get forty of them for 2,000 ducats.[2] It is true that in this case the selfish spirit of the masses was seconded by more than one political consideration. With many, it was hatred of the Targowicians,

[1] That this was the case in the first Partition also is proved by the official list of the persons bribed, in Lelewel, II. 87, in which list one of the same names appears as in 1793. — [2] Blum's *Denkwürdigkeiten des Grafen Sievers*, III. 232. 623.

which made them friendly to the Russians, as soon as the latter held out a prospect of the overthrow of those traitors. As many more were influenced by the thought that they had been virtually Russian subjects for a hundred years, and that resistance had only made their condition worse; it seemed to them mere folly to refuse payment for an acknowledgment which they must have yielded to force. And lastly the sentiments of the King and Kossakowski—an innate dislike for everything German—were far and wide diffused—and had constantly been increased by the state of things in Great Poland above described, by the difference of religion, and the undoubted superiority and patriotic leanings of the immigrants. With what wrath was the humbling fact observed, that more than one landowner enquired after the frontier of the Prussian share—which had as yet remained a secret—in order to buy land beyond it before the prices were raised by the proclamation of the new rule![1] Under the influence of these feelings the Poles were ready to meet the Russians half-way, in order to gain their aid in thrusting back the Prussians, if it were but for an inch.

The honest Buchholz had no suspicion that Sievers was making as powerful a use of this last lever as of any other. The following extracts from certain letters will place the position of affairs before us more clearly than any description could do.

"The King," wrote Buchholz on the 2nd of March, "informs me that the Minister von Hoym will send the large sum required. This intelligence has given the Ambassador great pleasure and we are still pulling at the same oar." "We are progressing" he said two months later "partly by gentle, and partly by forcible, means; we have also made use of the money allotted to us, and have made a common purse, which greatly furthers our cause."

Sievers, on the other hand, reported to his ministers at

[1] Buchholz to Möllendorf, April 2rd.

the beginning of April as follows: "In the instructions sent to me you have inserted a clause directing me to hinder the aggrandizement of Prussia as much as possible. You have ordered General Igelström to pacify men's minds, and to show every consideration towards the Prussians. I am in need of larger funds for distribution, for Möllendorf has orders to proceed as far as he can. He has received 100,000 Ducats from his court, and has already distributed eighty thousand of them. I have only ten thousand and want a great deal more."

Such relations need no criticism; they shows how clearly the cabinet of St. Petersburg understood the vast importance of Posen to the political independence of Prussia; and with what reluctance they made the sacrifice of such a concession to their new system. A more far-seeing man than Buchholz might even then have felt the insecurity of the ground which the Russian alliance afforded him; since, from the very first, there was no lack of political and military differences. The frontier line agreed upon for Prussia was drawn according to a defective map, and had therefore been marked out at several points in a strategetically unfavourable manner. It was the same on the side of the Russians, where they had contented themselves by marking three quarters of the frontier by a straight line upon the map. But when it came to the actual execution, the Russian Generals silently made the necessary alterations, always of course at the expense of the Republic. General Möllendorf was directed, in answer to his report, to follow this example; but he every where met with opposition from the Russian commanders, who defended the interests of Poland against him, as their own. They allowed him indeed to include a few districts near Czenstochau, Lenzyk and Willenberg within his *cordon;* but when he also claimed the town of Zakrozyn in the neighbourhood of Warsaw, Igelström pointed to the letter of the treaty; and Sievers, who in this case, as with the Poles, assumed the air of a mediator, contented himself with holding

out a vague prospect of the impending discussions in the Diet, and thereby for the moment avoiding an open breach.

And thus had Russia step by step brought her task to a final solution. We have seen how she occupied one position after another, incessantly carried on her operations, and made uninterrupted progress with methodical foresight. The stroke was never allowed to fall upon the victim until resistance was no longer possible. Thus Prussia, Austria, and England, were successively won; and now at the last moment, before the final act, the Polish rulers were drawn over to the Russian side. The Republic stood isolated between its oppressors, deprived of all support, and given up by itself and the world. The moment of action had arrived. The Polish Government had already announced the attitude which it intended henceforward to assume. According to the directions of the Ambassadors, it had secretly sent orders to the provinces to submit; but in order to conceal this understanding with Russia from Europe, it bargained for a certain show of force on the part of the victors. Thus, on the Prussian side, the Chancellor Malachowski sent off the instructions in question to the magistrates of Dantzic, as early as the beginning of March;[1] whereupon Dantzic demanded of the Prussians that their own town garrison should be left in the place, which was, of course, not granted; and when it capitulated, on the 25th, General Raumer had to fire a few rounds before the garrison withdrew from the works. On the same day a royal patent was issued which proclaimed the seizure of the country between the former boundary and a line from Czenstochau through Rava to Soldau,—as well as the two towns of Dantzic and Thorn—in all 1016 German square miles (about 23,408 English square miles), with a million and a half of inhabitants; at the same time a prospect of a formal act of cession by the previous government was held out, but the new inhabitants were ordered to do

[1] Buchholz, *Correspondence with Möllendorf.*

homage immediately. The proceedings were exactly similar on the Russian side. In Kaminiek, Orlowski had hitherto bid defiance to every hostile summons, until at last his own Government appointed a successor to him, with whom Kretschetnikow very quickly came to terms. The latter then issued the Russian manifesto on the 7th of April, which in its language was pretty nearly the same as the Prussian, but far exceeded it in its demands, since it announced the incorporation of 4,000 German square miles (18,666 English s. m.) with more than three million inhabitants;—*i. e.* of all the Polish country east of a straight line from Kaminiek and the Galician border to Polozk and Drissa. The importance of this acquisition will be seen, when we reflect that Poland henceforth was only a little larger than this Russian share; that the Turks saw all the Polish land which bordered on their territory pass into Russian hands; and that Austria's dominions were now for the first time brought into immediate contact with Russia. The Russian flag floating from the rocky peaks and bastions of Kaminiek, the most important military position in these regions,[1] proclaimed to the South and West of Europe the unchecked advance of the Sclavonian military power.

The ceremony of receiving homage from the new inhabitants passed over without difficulty or resistance, both in the Prussian and Russian shares. It was calculated in Berlin, with great satisfaction, that the newly acquired province was larger than Silesia; that it would bring in a net income of 4 or 5 million dollars, and increase the army by several regiments. The most important advantage was unquestionably the military rounding off of the Eastern frontier of the kingdom, which we may remember had hitherto afforded not the slightest security for the defence of the German territory. A glance at the map is sufficient to show us the main features of the case. Whilst Silesia in the

[1] Haeften enlarges on this subject; Desp. of March 18.

South, and East Prussia in the North, project far towards the East, the frontier of Brandenburg retreats between the two far towards the West, so that Great Poland lies in the midst of all these, threatening Königsberg and Breslau in the rear, and pushing forward to within a few days' march of Berlin. As long as Poland was powerful she pressed heavily upon Brandenburg from this side—kept Silesia in a state of dependence, and constrained West Prussia to feudal service. Now she was weak and harmless; but the Russian military forces had been domiciled for ages on her soil, and the necessity for protecting the frontier of Brandenburg, and uniting Prussia with Silesia, had been more than ever felt during the Silesian war. The court of Berlin, therefore, had every reason, in 1793, to rejoice at the attainment of this object; it was a conquest which was demanded by the most vital interests of self-preservation, and was about equally important for North Germany as Dauphiné for France. Moreover, from the progress which the German element had already made in this border district, and the confusion of Polish affairs, it was to be hoped that the new government would rapidly strike root; the position of the monarchy therefore in the East might be regarded as settled on a sure basis.

These aspirations, it is true, soon enough vanished in smoke; and it has been a thousand times said that this failure was the necessary recompense of the perfidy and falsehood, with which Prussia helped to trample down the freedom of her own ally. We may be deceived by patriotic feelings, but we cannot refer the subsequent catastrophes to this source, however great the abhorrence we may feel for the acts of brutality which accompanied this event, and the disregard of existing treaties. We have already shown that Poland had little reason, after the 3rd of May, to reckon on the Prussian alliance of 1790. In international affairs we must always take into account, not merely the letter, but in an equal degree the ground and object, of a treaty. In the case before us the matter stood thus; that Poland had ob-

tained the treaty of 1790 in express opposition to Russia and Austria; but that the patriotic party entered in 1791 into close relations with Austria, and the Targowicians in 1792 had allied themselves with Russia; and that both, consequently, had vied with each other in giving up all connexion with Prussia. The patriots, as we have seen, entertained no doubts on this point even in 1791; and Prussia never gave any assurances of support to the Targowicians; we cannot, therefore, talk of the breach of an effective treaty in the measures adopted by Prussian policy.

Thus much, indeed, lies beyond a doubt; that neither of the Polish parties had been guilty of any active aggression against Prussia, when she made up her mind to the partition. Prussia was in every sense of the word the aggressor against Poland, and that too without the shadow of a legal pretext. But if ever a policy of conquest was rendered desirable, nay absolutely essential, by the circumstances of the times, it was in this case. That which gave its fatal character to this period, and completely unhinged the whole system of Europe, was not the Revolution alone, nor the ambition of Russia to rule the world alone, but the coincidence of the two, by which all existing rights and titles of possession were called in question. It will be acknowledged that in such crises, self preservation becomes the leading principle in every individual: the real responsibility does not depend so much on the single acts of the contest once begun, as on the question, who first kindled the conflagration, and who endeavoured to prevent it from breaking out. With the facts which now lie before us, it is not difficult to apply this standard to the Polish question. Prussia was the Power which since 1791, when the French war became imminent, first began to speak of territorial acquisition and compensation, and thereby lent to a Coalition, whose mission was entirely one of defence and conservative disinterestedness, the character of aggressive selfishness, and envious discord. This guilt is neither to be concealed nor defended. Just as clearly,

in the subsequent developement of the affair, are the faults of the Court of Vienna brought to light, which simultaneously directed the enmity of Prussia against Poland, and tore asunder the new bond between the German Powers; these faults are—Leopold's plan of the Polish-Saxon Union, and Francis' claims to the Franconian Margraviates. The immediate consequence was a secret alienation between Austria and Prussia, and the melancholy emulation with which they subsequently hurried into the Russian alliances of July and August. The whole matter was finally decided in those negotiations which took place on French soil in the course of September. When Prussia at that time offered a general peace to the French Government, she virtually renounced all plans of aggrandizement in Poland; since nothing was more certain, than that on the conclusion of that peace, Austria, France and England, would have entered the lists to maintain the integrity of Poland. All Europe would have recurred to the system of the Emperor Leopold; and in spite of Catharine's lust of conquest—in spite of all the corruption of the Government of the Polish nobility—the protection of Europe would have prolonged the existence of the Republic. But instead of this, France and Austria simultaneously announced their offensive plans, which threatened our whole quarter of the globe with the most violent convulsions; whereupon Prussia no longer hesitated to give effect to her stipulations with Russia. All these things worked together:—the deep corruption of the Polish state—the urgent necessity for Prussia to look after her own safety—and the general and impetuous advance of the other Powers. It is easy to point out the dark side in the resolutions come to in these perilous times; it is a duty of humanity to feel the deepest compassion for the fate of perishing Poland; but the question always remains, what better course was left for Prussia, considering the attitude assumed by Austria, Russia and France? Ought the King, perhaps, to have done, in 1793, what he did two years afterwards, amidst

general disapprobation—withdraw himself from the storm which raged on all sides into a neutrality full of disquiet and contempt? Or ought he to have allied himself with the Parisian assassins of September, in open war against the rest of Germany, in favour of the Polish slaveholders? Or ought he, lastly, to have promoted the extension of Austria, to have thrown himself with all his force upon the French, and meanwhile have allowed the Russian garrisons to fix themselves as firmly in Posen and Gnesen, as in Grodno and Warsaw?

No, after the most careful consideration, we can come to no other conclusion than this; that the resolution to appropriate a frontier province of Poland, was decidedly the only one which, under the circumstances, did not lead to evident disaster—the only one, therefore, which was consistent with the duty of the Prussian government. As the whole of European policy was, at the end of 1792, in a state of the most miserable complication, so this Polish branch of that policy was not followed by favourable results alone; on the contrary, it led to many acts of violence and much animosity; and above all it was very imperfectly carried out. On this head we have still a few remarks to make.

It was a matter of course that Prussia could acquire no Polish land for herself, without allowing Russia to appropriate a corresponding share. But the more heavily the mighty power of Russia—which had been continually rising since the reign of Peter I.—pressed on the frontiers of North Germany, the more cautious and deliberate did it behove Prussia to be, in fixing the boundary by which the extent of the intermediate State was to be diminished. This is self-evident; and the Court of Berlin had, moreover, an excellent example before their eyes in Frederick II., in the first Polish partition. On that occasion not a syllable was uttered, not a step was taken, without the most accurate calculation, and the strictest regard to the whole object in view. The advantage of every acquisition at the expense of

Poland, was carefully weighed against the dangers of Russian aggrandizement; and the double object of weakening and yet preserving Poland, though not openly avowed, was never for a moment lost sight of. But there was no thought of such a view of the case in 1793. The Prussian Government grasped eagerly at Polish territory, delighted at every fresh acquisition, and careless of future consequences. They seized for themselves more than was requisite for the correction of their boundary line—a district of more than 90 English miles in breadth beyond the present Province of Posen—and thereby deprived themselves of the possibility of calling upon Russia to moderate her claims. But the Russian boundary line, which was drawn with rude hand across the patient map, was a sentence of death to Poland. Those who took so much to-day, would certainly not be content with so little to-morrow; such an act of robbery implied the annihilation—such a partition, the utter destruction—of Poland. In 1793, the King of Prussia—as will be proved by documentary evidence—by no means entertained such a wish; the evil was, that he did not act according to a well-considered system, but allowed himself to be driven on from day to day, aimless and vacillating, by transient impulses and moods, which taken singly were all reasonable enough. And thus he sanctioned the treaty of St. Petersburg—though he was by no means insensible to the dangers of the Russian supremacy, and was avowedly on a footing of mutual dislike with Catharine—without a thought of the necessary aggravation of the difference between them which the fall of Poland must produce. As far as we can see, it was one circumstance especially which caused him to overlook for the moment the danger of the course which he was taking—*viz.* the Empress's designing profession of anti-revolutionary zeal. As Catharine ostentatiously displayed her hatred of the Revolution by police orders, by public prayers in the churches, and proclamations—in every way in short but that of sending auxiliary troops—she succeeded

in inspiring in the King's mind, for a considerable time, a firm belief in her unselfishness and loyalty.

This first mistake led, as usual, to others. The district about the Middle Vistula, the Bug and the Narew, forms, according to the geographical and political relations of Central Europe, and the historical experience of centuries, one of those strong points of attack, which in the hands of a powerful monarch spread supremacy and dominion on every side. A similar vantage ground is formed by the Alps and the Netherlands in the West of Europe, and by the plains of the Lower Danube in the East. The fate of such districts is always the same; great nations struggle for their possession for centuries, until the desire of peace, and the progress of civilization, lead to their being entrusted to neutral or impotent rulers under a common guarantee. From this point of view, which is the only one to which a careful examination of both German and European interests can lead, the endeavour of the German Powers to circumscribe Poland—which from Galicia had often fixed herself in Hungary and Bohemia, and from Great Poland had overwhelmed East and West Prussia—was perfectly justified. But the very same sound policy should have prevented every step which opened the way to the entire destruction of this intermediate State. From the circumstances of the case, no other Power could profit by the proceeding except Russia, the most powerful and aggressive of them all. This has been proved by the whole course of events since 1793. In 1795 the King of Prussia was compelled against his will to consent to the total destruction of Poland. His successor had to give up the important line of the Vistula and Narew—which he had originally kept to himself—to the Russians in 1814. And since that period, the saying of Pozzo de Borgo has proved true, that Russia conquered these lands "to open to herself, in immediate contact with Europe, a new theatre for the display of her power, her talents and her pride."

Let us now imagine, in the place of Frederick William II., a Prince who really would have been a guide and leader of his people, and in all his plans and actions have followed the principles of sound policy. Would such a Prince have had the means of taking an energetic part in the Polish question, and yet of putting the curb on the pretensions and encroachments of Russia? In other words did the Russian hegemony in these regions spring from natural and unalterable sources, or from the easily avoidable errors of German policy?

The answer will be found in the history before us. The real root of the evil lay in the inveterate and mutually well-grounded jealousy of the German Powers. As long as Prussia stood opposed to the Russian policy without support from Austria, she had no choice between an open breach and entire dependence. As the successes of Frederick the Great resulted from a transient good understanding with Joseph in 1772, so the pernicious tenor of the treaty of St. Petersburg arose from the renewal of discord between Prussia and Austria. As long as the Court of Berlin looked to St. Petersburg for support against the Emperor, and the Austrian Government regarded a Russian alliance as a weapon against Prussia, every path was open to the ambition of Russia, and a systematic, energetic, and at the same time cautious, treatment of the Polish question with a view to the general interests of Europe was simply impossible. In this respect, too, Prussia had on several occasions, as we have, seen committed errors, which were subsequently more than equalled by false steps on the Austrian side.

It is the development of this relation which we have now to observe. The report of the conclusion of the treaty of St. Petersburg did not reach Vienna until the middle of March, as its ratification in Berlin was delayed by the article respecting the war with France. Before we can observe the effect which it produced in the Austrian capital, it will be necessary to look at the position which Austria had in the meantime gained in the French war.

CHAPTER V.

RECOVERY OF BELGIUM BY THE AUSTRIANS.

AUSTRIA'S PROJECTED PREPARATIONS AGAINST FRANCE.—FRANKFORT CONFERENCES.—PLAN OF THE CAMPAIGN.—DUMOURIEZ AGAINST HOLLAND.—WEAKNESS OF THE PRINCE OF COBURG.—BATTLES ON THE ROER.—RELIEF OF MAESTRICHT.—FLIGHT OF THE FRENCH.—INTERNAL CONDITION OF BELGIUM.—UNION WITH FRANCE.—RISINGS OF THE PEASANTS.—DUMOURIEZ'S RETURN.—HE BREAKS WITH THE DEMOCRATS.—BATTLE OF NEERWINDEN.—DUMOURIEZ GIVES UP BELGIUM.

ACCORDING to the agreement made in December—by which Austria and Russia engaged to carry on offensive war on a grand scale against France, and the struggle against the Revolution was changed into a war of conquest for the advantage of Austria—there was the most urgent necessity that the latter should enter on the theatre of war as soon as possible, and with overwhelming forces. And certainly the intentions of the Government in this respect were excellent. Coburg was to receive 69,000 men for the main struggle in Belgium; Hohenlohe was to command 38,000 in Luxemburg and Trêves, and Wurmser 42,000 on the Upper Rhine. These, together with 20,000 men in Italy and 50,000 serviceable men of the reserve at home, would have made up an army of nearly 220,000 men—a number which would have been worthy of the greatness of the object and the dignity of Austria.[1] For the present however these armaments proceeded very slowly. Above all, money was wanted. The Government could not make up its mind to an extra-

[1] These figures are to be found in several despatches of Haeften; and they are confirmed by a letter of the Emperor to the King of Prussia, which we shall presently quote.

ordinary war-tax, but received instead, the voluntary contributions of loyal subjects—gold buckles, silver hearts, purses and goblets filled with ducats—showing great individual patriotism, but producing an insignificant sum total. To this was added the strife of parties among the military leaders, which daily became more bitter. While all the Generals in command belonged to the school of Laudon, Field Marshal Lascy possessed a decisive influence in the military administration at Vienna, and showed very little zeal in assisting generals whom he disliked. When, therefore, at the beginning of February, the Prince of Coburg, attended by the Colonels of his staff, Mack and Fischer, repaired to Frankfort to meet and consult with the King of Prussia, the Duke of Brunswick, and Generals Manstein and Grawert, the forces enumerated above were by no means in a state of readiness. Coburg estimated his Belgian army at 55,000 men; it was resolved to increase these by 11,000 Russians whom Frederick of Brunswick had led to Gueldres, and 13,000 Hanoverians in the pay of the Maritime Powers—and to support the operations of this great body of men by the 33,000 men whom Hohenlohe-Kirchberg was reported to have under his command. A second main-army was to be gathered round the King on the Maine, consisting of 42,000 Prussians, 6000 Hessians, 3000 Darmstädter, and 5000 Saxons; and all these were to be supported by Wurmser, whose strength was estimated for the present at 24,000 men. War had been as good as declared by the Empire since the conclusion of the Imperial Diet of the 23rd of November (though the formal and official declaration of war was not issued till the 30th of April), and orders were given for calling out a Triplum—*i. e.* an army of the Empire of 120,000 men.[1] Meanwhile these preparations were carried on in so slow and partial a manner, that not even the contributions of money entered on the lists had been collected, and no more

[1] The *simplum* was 40,000.

than 17,000 soldiers of the Empire, at the most, were expected for this campaign,[1] besides the above-mentioned divisions. The idea therefore of a separate Army of the Empire was renounced from the very first, and the contingents were sent off to Coburg or Brunswick as they came in.

With respect to the immediate employment of these troops it was resolved as follows. First and foremost Coburg was to relieve Maestricht, which was threatened by the French, and to drive the enemy from the left bank of the Meuse. Brunswick was then to cross the Rhine, and besiege Mayence; for which purpose Coburg—who designated the capture of this town as the main object of the campaign—promised to send him 15,000 Austrians. On the fall of Mayence, Coburg was to take measures for the recovery of Belgium, and Wurmser to advance upon Landau, Brunswick upon Saarlouis, and Beaulieu upon Thionville, simultaneously.[2]

In these feeble and tentative arrangements we recognize the wavering mind of the Duke of Brunswick, and his aversion to the whole war.[3] From his habit of spending the same amount of time over important and unimportant matters, and looking after every particular himself, and thereby losing sight of the main object in view, he was completely lost in the annoyances which attend on every coalition war, and which, on this occasion, sprang in rich abundance from the military preparations of the German Empire. He was again convinced, as in 1794, that nothing but disgrace would result from the approaching campaign. Meanwhile the conferences were tolerably harmonious, as the Prince of Coburg vied with the Duke in slowness and circumspection—was equally convinced of the necessity of patiently waiting on the Meuse until Mayence should be taken,—and was in no

[1] *Vid.* Häusser, I. 528, for the details. — [2] The official minutes of this Conference are given in Wagner's *Geschichte des Preussischen Feldzugs am Rhein 1793.* — [3] This is not inconsistent with Häusser's view (I. 575) that the Duke was obliged to consent to some important alterations in his plan.

hurry to act on the offensive before the arrival of his reserves.

What a different degree of energy and activity was shown, at the same time, on the side of the enemy! When Dumouriez received orders to attack Holland, his force had been completely crippled by the late uncertainty of affairs; the recruiting had been interrupted, the treasury was exhausted, and the Commissariat in the same state of derangement as in November. The General hastened to take the necessary measures. His present plan was to force his way from Antwerp through North Brabant, seize the strongholds of the Lower Meuse, cross this river near Dortrecht, and thence to march upon Amsterdam with all possible expedition. The success of the scheme depended entirely on a bold and unexpected *coup de main;* the agitated state of Belgium, the ruined state of his own army, and the approach of the Austrians, left him no choice. His forces amounted in all to somewhat more than 100,000 men, of which about 10,000 were distributed in different garrisons, 11,000 occupied the province of Namur under General Harville, and 19,000 under Valence covered the Ardennes (Verviers, Stavelot and Malmedy). From this point an army of 30,000 men under Dumouriez's own command lay extended from Liége towards Aix la Chapelle and the Roer; while 16,000 under Miranda watched the Lower Meuse from Maestricht to Roermonde. There remained, therefore, about 17,000 men for the expedition against Amsterdam, and it was evident that everything depended on the rapidity of their movements.[1] The Dutch, who were still in a very imperfect state of preparation, had dispersed their small army along the extensive line of frontier; they were, however, taking active measures

[1] All these figures are taken from the muster-rolls of the several corps in the Military Archives in Paris. Dumouriez's estimates in his *Mémoires* are invariably too low; the higher figures in Miranda's Correspondence give the nominal strength, "on paper."

to increase their force, while Dumouriez on his part had but little prospect of receiving any further reinforcement from France. The Minister Beurnonville had indeed promised to do all in his power. He sent off the greater part of the garrison of Paris to the army, and in general cultivated the best possible understanding with the commanders; which the latter, after the disorders of Pache's administration, acknowledged with feelings of relief and gratitude: "You no longer say," wrote Miranda, "as Hassenfratz once did, that generals are to be had by millions; or, like Cambon, that soldiers are every thing and generals nothing." The withdrawal of the garrison from Paris, however, gave the Proletaries an opportunity for fresh revolts, but afforded little aid against the Austrians. Everything depended, therefore, on the speed with which Dumouriez could push on, and reach Amsterdam before the Germans brought aid from the East, or the English from the West. Dumouriez now ordered Miranda to increase his corps to 30,000 by draughts from Valence's army—to take Maestricht and Venlo as speedily as possible, and then advance with all his force upon Nymwegen. If these operations succeeded, he thought that he should have Holland entirely in his power, and in his sanguine zeal he imagined himself at the successful termination of an enterprise which was only just commenced. "As soon as I have effected the revolution in Amsterdam, I shall march back by way of Utrecht, and in all probability, bring with me Dutch auxiliary troops, to add to whose numerical strength Thouvenot shall meanwhile raise 25 battalions of Belgian infantry. If I had more time, I would proceed in a more regular way, but we must fight like desperate men—inspire astonishment and terror—conquer or die; it is, under the present critical circumstances, the only way of saving the Republic."

We see that he was in a similar position and mood, as he had been five months earlier, when opposed to the Duke of Brunswick at Montmedy. On the latter occasion, he

wished to draw off to the left, and throw himself upon Belgium, to excite astonishment and fear. He was now equally hopeless of being able to resist the daily increasing Austrians, and he once more sought to save himself by a brilliant diversion. But now his zeal was quickened, and at the same time his position rendered doubly difficult, by the unsatisfactory footing on which he stood with the Parisian parties. From France he had nothing more to hope; on the contrary, he intended to employ his Batavian and Belgian troops, not merely against the Austrians, but more especially against the Jacobins.

On the 17th of February his troops crossed the Dutch frontier at Bergen-op-zoom; and he pushed forward with all the impetuosity of his character, increased threefold by desperation. On the 23rd Breda was invested, and surrendered on the fourth day—though it possessed a brave and adequate garrison—by its commandant, General Bylandt. Fort Klundert fell at the same time after a brave resistance, and immediately afterwards, the weakly fortified Gertruidenburg. Early in March, therefore, sufficient ground was won on the Hollands-Diep—the broad, shallow, lake-like frith near the mouth of the Meuse—to enable him to make arrangements for crossing. While vessels were being collected from all quarters for the transport of the troops, Dumouriez quartered his regiments in hastily built straw huts close to the shore, to be ready to start at any moment. Meanwhile the difficulties had increased. The Dutch had got together more than a hundred armed vessels, with which they filled the arm of the Meuse from the sea to Gorkum; all the fortresses in their rear were now protected by inundation, and just at the right moment a regiment of English Guards, 2,000 strong, appeared, to strengthen the garrison of Dortrecht which was first exposed to attack. "Two months ago," wrote Spiegel at that time, "we could have made no resistance, but now we are in good condition, and look with

confidence to the future." Such was the position of affairs when the storm broke from the German side.

General Miranda began to open his trenches before Maestricht on the 21st of February. He employed in this service 12,000 men on the left bank of the Meuse, under his own command, and 5,000 on the right bank in Wyk under General Leveneur. As there was no time for a regular siege; he tried to terrify the garrison by bombarding the town, set fire to it in several quarters, but made no impression either on the Commandant the Prince of Hessen-Philipsthal or the citizens. Meanwhile General Lamarlière occupied Roermonde, lower down the river, with a nominal force of 7,000 men, but which had melted away by want, exposure and desertion, to 4,500; and General Champmorin was pushed forward with 4,700 men to occupy Venlo, where however Frederick of Brunswick-Oels got the start of him with 10,000 men, and took up a position extremely awkward for the line of communication between Miranda and Dumouriez. Nor was the French line of defence on the Liege frontier in a sounder state. Valence, who in Dumouriez's stead commanded in all 36,000 men in that country, had his head-quarters in Liege itself, and would have liked to keep his troops together in the hilly country between Liege, Herve and Verviers. But the Commissioners of the Convention had compelled him—partly by Pache's orders, partly in accordance with their own desires—to revolutionize the old imperial city of Aix-la-Chapelle, and to extend his positions beyond Aix, to the—in a military point of view—entirely unimportant river Roer. In this way half his army was spread along a too extended line—Stengel in Eschweiler, Dampierre in Aix-la-Chappelle, and Lanoue in Aldenhoven. With a view of affording it some sort of security, Lamarlière was obliged to send forward a few outposts from Roermonde over the Roer, to Wassenberg, Dalheim, and Arsbeck, where a few unimportant skirmishes took place during the month of February. It is easy to perceive

that this could only increase the too great dispersion of the French forces. Dumouriez, however, only knew of 30,000 Austrians beyond the Roer, and indulged the hope that his generals, with a nearly double force, would easily keep the enemy back.

And in fact many weeks passed before the Prince of Coburg got into motion. The ground of his delay was always the same—deficiency in numbers. Even at the last conference he had to anounce that he had only 55,000, instead of 69,000 men, and now a new deficit of equal amount appeared; since at the end of February he had not more than 40,000 men under his colours. As General Wurmser, too, had for the present only 14,000, instead of 24,000, there was a recurrence of the same insufficiency of forces which had played so great a part in the failure of the past year. The King of Prussia, who received intelligence from the Emperor Francis in an autograph letter that there were 225,000 Austrians in the field, urged the Prince to commence the attack. The King himself—in spite of the by no means despicable enjoyments of his Frankfort sojourn—burned with desire to wipe out the disgrace of the previous autumn, and sent courier after courier urging the Prince to rescue Maestricht, and put an end to his shameful inactivity.[1] It was with great reluctance that Coburg made up his mind to attack the superior force of the enemy with his little army; he was decided at last by the increasing distress of Maestricht, and on the 1st of March he gave the longed-for order to attack.

In the early dawn, General Clerfait with several columns fell upon Aldenhoven, and somewhat later, Lieutenant Field-Marshal the Prince of Würtemberg, on Eschweiler. The French were surprised at both points, and routed in spite of a vigorous resistance. The victors pursued them with all speed, and pushed forward without stop-

[1] *M. S.* correspondence between Manstein and Tauenzien.

ping to Aix-la-Chapelle, where Dampierre tried a street-fight; but the Austrians, like the Hessians in Frankfort, were supported by the thoroughly exasperated inhabitants, and dispersed the French so completely that General Stengel was driven far away to the South and did not reach a French *corps d'armée* until he came to Namur. The other divisions fled with a loss of 2,000 men towards Liege, from which place Valence sent reinforcements to meet them, and for the present maintained the positions of Herve and Saumagne.[1]

But even these successes opened the way for the Prince of Coburg to raise the siege of Maestricht. While the Prince of Wurtemberg was following the French towards Liege, the Arch-Duke Charles hastened westwards directly towards Maestricht. The march was executed with such rapidity, that Miranda scarcely had time to remove the corps of General Leveneur from Wyk, and cause it to move up the stream and cross the Meuse by the bridge of Viset. He saw that his own position was not tenable, and he first sent his siege-train with 4,000 men, and soon afterwards the remainder of his army—some 7,000 men—under Philip of Chartres, back to Tongres; and then hastened himself to Liége to talk over further measures with Valence. Thus Maestricht was rescued, the right bank of the Meuse cleared of the enemy, and the first task of the Frankfort conference accomplished in three days. At Herve the zeal of the victors immediately relaxed, and only feeble attempts were made against Liége which Valence easily repelled.

This time, however, events were destined to move more quickly than the feeble leaders had dared to hope. The Arch-duke Charles could see from Maestricht the consternation

[1] For the details contained in this and the following pages we have constantly consulted not only the *Mémoires* of Dumouriez, the correspondence of Miranda, and the bulletins of the Austrian army (from the *Oesterr. Milit. Zeitschrift von 1813*), but also the correspondence of the Military Archives in Paris.

and disorder of the enemy, and determined to continue the pursuit without intermission. One of his columns had a skirmish, on the 4th, with Leveneur's troops, beyond Viset and the Archduke himself appeared on the same day with 11,000 men before Tongres, made three attacks upon it in quick succession, and at the third gained full possession of the town. The fugitives dispersed, some towards the West to Saint Trond, the others towards the South to Liége, where their intelligence spread universal terror. The French already imagined Belgium overrun by the enemy, and themselves cut off and surrounded; they were without any news of Lamarlière and Champmorin, and therefore came to the resolution to withdraw all their corps from Herve, &c., to give up Liége, and as speedily as possible to be in Saint Trond before the enemy. This plan was carried out in breathless haste, and the sick, the magazines and cannon, were left behind. In the course of the 5th, indeed, during their march to Saint Trond, they had to repel several divisions of the enemy, who from the side of Tongres were already harrassing the French line of retreat. The troops, already shaken by their previous misfortunes, could not stand this restless haste; they saw that the military chest and the heavy artillery were being sent by the nearest road to the French frontiers, and concluding that their danger was extreme they broke their ranks and fled. In one confused and disorderly mass, which hourly melted away, they made for St. Trond; Dumouriez maintained that more than 10,000 deserters ran as far as the French borders. "Every road," wrote a Civil Commissioner to the Minister at War, on the 7th, "is covered with fugitives, who mark their path by every kind of excess and devastation." The campaign would probably have been already decided, had Coburg pressed on with all his force beyond Liége; but the acquisition of this city seemed so important, and there were so many political and administrative matters to be arranged, that the Prince halted for several days, and thus left the French generals

time to recall Lamarlière and Champmorin,—who had hastened from Roermonde by way of Diest to St. Trond,—and then, on the 8th, to draw up their whole force, in a position protected by a canal, behind the town of Louvain. The rear-guard alone remained at Bautersem, and still held Tirlemont with 400 men.

The news of this catastrophe caused the greatest excitement in Belgium. Ever since the Thirty Government Commissioners had been let loose upon the country, there was not a province which had not felt the effects of the decree of the 15th of December. Everywhere the existing taxes were abolished at once, and thereby the order of every community completely ruined; the established Authorities were removed, and new elections ordered; pending which, all the property belonging to Royal persons, to the Towns, the Church, or the Corporations, was confiscated. Cambon had, from the very first, declared the immediate object of these measures—to enrich the French treasury by the wealth of Belgium. The ulterior object had been unreservedly announced by Danton in the Convention on the 31st of Jan. "As soon,' he said, "as the Belgian proletaries are emancipated, there will be no further difficulty in incorporating Belgium with the French territory." The decree therefore was issued on the same day, ordering the primary Electors in Belgium, not only to elect new Magistrates, but to give a vote respecting the future constitution of their country; and threatening to treat them as enemies unless their voices were given in favour of freedom and equality. As it was very well known in Paris, how much dislike and reluctance had to be overcome before the desired result could be obtained, the Ministry instructed their Commissioners to keep a strict watch over the assemblies of primary Electors, and to test the validity of every election—in other words, to dictate their commands with the aid of a French military force. Matters were carried on in accordance with these directions in every town. When the Authorities in Namur

were unwilling to hold any new elections, General d'Harville threatened to have them all arrested, and thus forcibly brought about the formation of an entirely democratic Council of Administration, which then named the French Commissioner as its Procureur-Syndic; whereupon the confiscation of public property was carried on without further difficulty. In Tournay the Magistracy thought of a more prudent plan, and having full confidence in the sentiments of the people, caused new representatives to be elected as quickly as possible; who, in virtue of their definitive appointment, had the right of withdrawing their province from the operation of the decree of the 15th of December. But they had given the French credit for too much respect for their own laws; for General Omoran prevented any election from taking place by force, until the Commissioner had confiscated the public lands. Matters were carried on in the same way through the whole of Belgium; and everywhere there were impotent protestations on the one side, and open rapacious violence on the other.

But this was by no means all. The Commissioners were exclusively selected from the dregs of the Parisian club; some of them could scarcely write their own names, and they were all destitute of any knowledge whatsoever of administration, or of the country to which they were sent; but to make up for this they were filled with the sentiments of the vilest Cordéliers. The lower their position in their own country, the more intoxicated were they by the sense of unlimited power; their arrogance, always brutal, sometimes amounted to aberration of mind. Wherever they came they demanded to be received with the same solemnities with which the Austrian Archdukes had formerly been honoured; sometimes they quashed the orders of the Conventional Commissioners, and one of them commanded Dumouriez to send off a reinforcement to some point on the line of the Meuse without delay. The Belgians had reason to complain of their rapacity. Whilst they received from Paris 800 francs

a month, in addition to a daily sum for their personal and travelling expenses, they plundered all the Belgian treasuries without shame, and took their stand,—wherever a claim was in question—on the ancient laws of the land, to which they otherwise showed such fanatical hostility. They likewise took care to gather round them all the elements of the Belgian people which were similar to themselves: "Ye poor," said a proclamation published in Namur, "throw away all shame; the rich who are the cause of your misery must be made to blush, the palace shall give way to the cottage." Meanwhile the Parisian Jacobin Club, being informed of the ill feeling which was raging in the country, anounced in another proclamation to the Belgians; that if they had the meanness to recall their tyrants, and to forget their liberation by the blood of Frenchmen, the brothers of the fallen would rush upon them and sacrifice them to the *manes* of the heroes! The Commissioners of the Convention, six in number, among whom was Danton, publicly confirmed this proclamation on every occasion.[1]

Dumouriez, who in his heart was furious at this stupid piece of brutality, prophesied a general revolt of the Belgians, as soon as ever the Germans should show themselves on the frontier. This was his chief reason for thinking the conquest of Holland indispensable to the maintenance of Belgium. But his protest was not regarded; on the contrary, the last step was taken just as he was marching against Holland, at the end of February, and Belgium was compelled to beg for incorporation into the great Republic.

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[1] Borgnet (*Hist. des Belges à la fin du 18. siècle)* has confirmed these statements by a superabundance of Belgian documents. Nor is there any lack of French testimony to the same effect in the secret correspondence. On the 10th of March the Conventional Commissioners themselves reported to the Minister at War: "The ignorance and madness of the Executive Commissioners are chiefly in fault." On the 19th, the Agent Millon writes to the Minister Lebrun: "The indignation against the Civil Commissioners and their thefts, is universal."

The Commissioners had already discussed the subject on the 3rd of February, and had with one exception decided for the union, which they said must be brought to pass by every means of reason, philanthropy, and revolutionary tactics, and lastly, in virtue of the rights of conquest. According to the favourite formula, however, the Belgian people were first to vote on the question; and the commissioner Chaussard reported to the Ministry—pretty much as Sievers had done to St. Petersburg—that as there were very few well-disposed voters, he needed money, much money, to work upon the people, and that it might be necessary to display the national power to prevent scandalous scenes in the assemblies. Liége, where a very different spirit prevailed from that of the rest of Belgium, and the majority was really in favour of a union with France, had already sent a petition to Paris in accordance with the wish of the Ministry, on the 28th of January. The result in the rest of Belgium was very different. In Mons, 150 Unionists drove ten times the number of opponents from the assembly of the people by the aid of the French garrison, and then freely and unanimously passed a resolution in favour of incorporation with the French people. The citizens of Ghent, a few weeks later, spared themselves a similar experience by not visiting the popular assembly at all; in this case about a hundred proletaries and sixty criminals, under the presidency of a cobbler, in their capacity of the sovereign people of Ghent, laid the city at the feet of the French Republic. A similar scene was enacted under the presidency of the French Colonel Lavalette in the Cathedral at Brussels; whereupon the *Sansculottes* celebrated the great day by destroying several "aristocratic" monuments. It is not necessary to describe the proceedings which took place in the other provinces, since they all bear the same stamp.

In the midst of these oppressive and violent proceedings intelligence arrived of the rapid and complete defeats of the tyrants, of the flight of the French troops from Ger-

many and the irruption of the Austrians, who in their uninterrupted progress had arrived within two days' march of Brussels. The aspect of the country was immediately transformed. The Jacobins now began to hide their property and to flee, the citizens assembled for mutual protection, and the peasants rose without further hesitation. The immediate cause of the rising was an order of the Conventional Commissioners, to send off the gold and silver church vessels of the sequestered corporations to France; an order which was immediately extended by the inferior agents to all the churches in the country, and was carried out amidst the most violent tumults. The patience of the nation was exhausted, and the country people, especially, excited by their religious feelings, rose in a mass against this outrage. In Flanders several risings took place at the same time, and in a few days 10,000 men were collected at Grammont; a sally of the garrison at Ghent was repulsed, and a few French cannon taken. A similar outbreak in Tournay was put down with great difficulty, and a tumultuous assembly in Antwerp was dispersed with bloody severity; and in order to cool the people's fanaticism, the Commandants ordered their soldiers to exercise in the churches. "The country," wrote Millon to the Ministry, is in full ferment; there are riots in every quarter; no convoy is safe on the roads, the thefts of the Commissioners have filled the people with indignation." In Brussels, half of whose garrison had marched out to strengthen the camp at Louvain, the Authorities ordered a general disarming of the people, and threatened to set fire to the town at the first symptom of disorder. But an Austrian proclamation was secretly and zealously spread about by the inhabitants, which promised entire oblivion of former differences and a recognition of the ancient privileges of the land.

All these tidings fell, like a succession of blows, on the head of Dumouriez, who, as we have seen, was just on the point of passing the Hollands Diep. At first he adhered to

his plan, and wrote to Valence that he must hold the line of the Meuse for fourteen days longer at any cost; whereupon Miranda, curiously enough, sent word to him from St. Trond, on the 6th, that everything was in good order again, and that he even hoped to be able to bring him 15,000 men to Holland. But the first intelligence of the advance of the Austrians had caused very great uneasiness in Paris. The Ministers invited Generals Custine, Servan and Labourdounaye to a council, and quickly came to the resolution that Dumouriez must return forthwith to Belgium. The latter obeyed, doubly embittered by all these disturbances of his plans, convinced of the impossibility of any longer delay, and in all respects prepared for every extreme. His first care was to pacify Belgium by putting a stop to the excesses of the Commissioners. Directly he arrived in Antwerp he banished the Government Commissioner from the city, and forbade the Jacobin Club, with threats of military force in case of disobedience, to busy themselves any further about politics. He sent orders in all directions to restore the silver vessels to the Churches and even to bring them back again from France. In Brussels he deposed the Commandant, an associate of the Jacobins, arrested the Government Commissioner, and disarmed the so-called army of *Sansculottes*. He called upon all the Communes of the land to draw up their just complaints, and on the 12th of March, despatched a letter to the Convention, in which he unsparingly revealed the late abuses. By each of these steps he irrevocably broke with the Parisian Rulers. The Commissioners of the Convention told him as much, and when a Brussels deputation begged for their church plate in accordance with Dumouriez's last order, they angrily replied, that the General was not there to give orders, but to receive them. Dumouriez needed not such expressions to tell him that he stood opposed to implacable enemies. The men who were just erecting the bloody tribunal of the Revolution might make use of him as long as he seemed necessary to

oppose the Austrians, but his subsequent fate was irrevocably determined on. He had no intention of patiently waiting for it; his first object was to make himself master of the situation. His only way out of the difficulties which beset him, was to drive the Austrians from the land by a rapid succession of blows, to complete the conquest of Holland, and thereby attach the army indissolubly to his person, and then to hold a bloody reckoning with the Parisians. Should fortune desert him at the first step, one last means still remained.

He therefore hastened from Brussels to the army. He had caused the fugitives to be collected from all quarters, drawn together 4,000 men under General Neuilly from the Ardennes, and 1,500 from the garrison at Brussels, by which he had raised the number of his forces at Louvain to 50,000 men; and now considered himself equal in strength to the enemy.

On his arrival in Louvain his determination to fight was stronger than ever—a determination which, even from a military point of view, seems much better justified than is generally acknowledged. The army threatened to fall to pieces at every touch; it had already at an earlier period been greatly demoralized by a bad commissariat and the machinations of the demagogues, and had suffered since its defeats by wholesale desertion. With such troops he could only hope for success from bold offensive operations, which might restore to his men some degree of self-confidence; they were utterly incapable of an obstinate defence, and a further retreat would have been followed by complete dissolution. Moreover the relative proportion of numbers was for the moment much more favourable to the French; than it was likely to be at a later period. For the Austrians had not even 50,000, as they supposed, but at most 40,000 men at their disposal; that re-inforcements were on the way seemed certain, and at any rate there was no doubt at all that Beaulieu and Hohenlohe were on their way from Treves

and Luxembourg towards Namur. In addition to this, it was announced, on the 8th, that 16,000 Hanoverans were approaching the Belgian frontier, and on the 10th, that Brunswick-Oels had reached Herzogenbusch with his Prussians. Lastly, 10,000 Dutch might at any moment force their way across the rivers, and the already announced landing of an English corps might be immediately expected to take place. On the other hand it is true that the Convention had ordered a fresh levy of 300,000 men in February, but thus far the only result had been a number of *émeutes* in the Departments, and a civil war in La Vendée; and as to the rabble which the Commissioners of the Convention had drawn into Belgium from the border Departments—"rather trustworthy politicians," as they themselves wrote, "than useful soldiers"—Dumouriez was obliged to send them home as speedily as possible. It was therefore in the highest degree uncertain whether the latter would receive any real accession of strength, while reinforcements for his opponents were at hand in no small numbers. His only chance, therefore, was to take advantage of Coburg's momentary weakness, to inflict a blow which would drive the Prussians, Dutch and English, to a becoming distance.

On the 15th, the first Austrian divisions were seen in the direction of Tongres; by a rapid attack they had captured the weakly-garrisoned town of Tirlemont. Dumouriez had just altered the battle-array of his army, and was employed in placing his divisions at greater intervals, in order to oppose the possible intervention of the Prussians from the North. In doing this he made the bitter experience, that at the beginning of the battle at Tirlemont, several of his generals to the right and left deserted their new posts and timidly retreated upon the main army at Louvain. But he saw with satisfaction that the behaviour of his troops improved in a marked degree under his firm conduct. All the more boldly, therefore, did he move forward, on the 16th, with his whole force against the Austrians, attacked them

before Tirlemont on the front and flank at the same time, and drove them through that town and beyond the high banks of the little river Gette. Both parties lost about 1,000 men in this engagement which lasted for eight hours; but this first advantage, after so many shameful defeats, somewhat restored to the French their confidence in themselves and in their leader.

On the 17th Dumouriez reconnoitred the position of the enemy more closely, and determined to bring the matter to a decision on the following day. The Austrian line extended behind the Gette from north to south—from the high road which connects Tirlemont with Saint Trond and Tongres, to the village of Raccourt. The Archduke Charles with the van of the army formed the extreme right wing, which rested on the high road; then came the divisions of the Prince of Würtemberg and Colloredo; and next to the latter, as left wing, lay the reserves under Clerfait between the villages of Landen and Raccourt. They had occupied the villages which lay in front quite close to the river—first Oberwinden and Neerwinden on the south, and then Neerhespen and Orsmael on both sides of the high road—but had left the strongly-built country town of Leau,—half a league north of the high road pretty nearly in the line of their battle-array—unoccupied. Dumouriez calculated that the northern or right wing of this position would be the stronger, since it occupied and covered the natural line of retreat for the Austrians, the high road to Tongres. He determined, therefore, to send General Miranda the leader of his left wing to occupy Leau and to wrest Orsmael from the Austrians. Chartres, on the other hand, was to make the main attack with the centre of the army against Neerwinden, and Valence with the right wing, against Oberwinden; and after taking these villages they were gradually to wheel to the left, and constantly outflanking the enemy, to keep advancing till they too reached the high road, and thereby drove back the Austrians from Tongres. In accordance with this plan, Dumouriez set all

his columns in motion, almost at the same time, at 7 o'clock on the morning of the 18th. The battle began on the high road, where Miranda by a vigorous charge drove the light troops of the Archduke out of Orsmael, but soon received a check from the superior fire of the Austrian artillery. Towards 8 o'clock General Champmorin occupied Leau by the side of Miranda, and from this place sent forward a regiment of Chasseurs against the rear of the Archduke;[1] at the same time Valence from the opposite end of the line of battle came into the engagement at Raccourt and Oberwinden, and pushed forward a column (Lamarche) into the plain behind these villages as far as Landen; by which means the intended out-flanking of the enemy was commenced on this side also. Being thus hard pressed on many sides the Prince of Coburg ordered a vigorous attack upon all these columns at once. Clerfait moved against Valence; the Prince of Würtemberg drew a portion of his corps from the rear of the Archduke, in order to recover Leau from the French, and General Benjowski brought the rest to reinforce the Archduke, who then without further hesitation proceeded to attack Miranda. At the same moment the battle was commenced in the centre also, between the Duke of Chartres and Count Colloredo, who disputed the possession of the village of Neerwinden with the greatest obstinacy. The contest continued undecided at this point until the evening; Neerwinden having been taken and lost twice according to French reports, and once according to the Austrian account; it remained at last in the hands of Colloredo, who was not, however, able to drive the French beyond the Gette. Clerfait had great difficulty in maintaining his ground at Oberwinden and Raccourt; he had, as Dumouriez rightly foresaw, scarcely 8,000 men at his disposal; but he repulsed two charges of a superior number of French infantry with the

[1] Champmorin's report in the military archives of Paris, *Armée du Nord, Supplément.*

greatest steadiness, and held his position on the whole until the afternoon. Whilst a bloody engagement was carried on without decision in this way on the south and in the centre, the Archduke Charles decided the fortune of the day a little after two o'clock. He completely routed Miranda's columns by a splendid charge, and drove them over the Gette; whole battalions of the national volunteers broke their ranks and dispersed; the artillery-men deserted their guns and a crowd of fugitives carried such confusion into Champmorin's columns, that that General retreated as quickly as possible over the bridge of Helve. The whole left wing of the French army was completely broken up.[1] Coburg immediately brought up some of his own victorious regiments to strengthen Clerfait and Colloredo, and Clerfait threw the Nassau Cuirassiers upon the enemy with such violence, that Valence placed himself in person in front of his squadrons, succeeded in resisting the charge, but was obliged immediately afterwards to leave the battle-field severely wounded.[2]

But this gallantry could no longer win back victory to the French side, since after Miranda's flight the Archduke was able to attack the other divisions of the enemy in the rear; nay he might even reach Tirlemont before them and thereby intercept the road to Brussels. Dumouriez therefore hastened on the same evening in person to the defeated corps, and led all of it that seemed capable of being held together back again to the Gette, highly delighted that the Austrians did not in the meanwhile renew the attack on his centre. On the following morning he continued his retreat with all his forces towards Louvain, without suffering much annoyance from the Austrians; his hope of changing the fate of the whole campaign by a sudden *coup* was over. The French had lost more than 5,000 in slain and prisoners, and thirty

[1] Champmorin's report. — [2] At a later period, after Dumouriez's fall, Miranda gave an essentially different account of this battle; but all the reports from the spot, whether French or Austrian, agree in the above details.

guns on their left wing.[1] Still more unfavorable, however, was the moral effect of this battle; since the lately healed panic of Aldenhoven and Aix-la-Chapelle was now renewed in the fullest measure. By the evening of the 18th Miranda's corps alone had lost 4,000 deserters and a despairing spirit soon spread through the rest of the forces. No one could regard the battle itself as a defeat of the French, but as it compelled them to continue their retreat, it brought absolute annihilation upon the army. Dumouriez acknowledged that Belgium could no longer be maintained. It is true that some of the French divisions fought three battles near Tirlemont and Louvain, but they could no longer stop the march of the Austrians, and the great mass of the army was completely useless. The number of deserters increased in two days to 10,000; it was more especially the Volunteers and the *Nationales*—about three-quarters of the army—who having been most implicated in the machinations of the Clubs, now spread tumult and confusion in every direction, loudly cursed the further defence of Belgium, and hastened towards the French frontier in disorderly crowds. Dumouriez resolved to leave them to their own devices, and to form a special corps of about 15,000 men from the troops of the line and the artillery, with which he in some degree covered the further retreat.

[1] *Moniteur*, April 12th. The French have lost at least from 5,000 to 6,000—the Austrians at most from 3,000 to 5,000; the regiments Royal Allemand, the Cuirassiers of Nassau, the free corps of Grün-Laudon and O'Donnel have suffered considerably.

CHAPTER VI.

CHANGE OF MINISTRY IN AUSTRIA.

PARTIES IN THE CABINET OF VIENNA.—NEGOTIATION WITH ENGLAND.—SPIELMANN THREATENS BAVARIA.—ENGLAND WISHES TO ENLARGE BELGIUM.—DUMOURIEZ'S CATASTROPHE.—CONFERENCE AT ANTWERP.—COBURG'S NEGOTIATION WITH FRANCE.—CHANGE OF MINISTRY IN VIENNA.—BARON THUGUT OPPOSES THE PARTITION OF POLAND.—PRUSSIA'S SUCCESSES AGAINST CUSTINE.—EFFECT OF THE PROCEEDINGS IN VIENNA UPON PRUSSIA.

WHILE the Austrian army was making its rapid and victorious progress through Belgium, the Court of Vienna found itself in a position by no means agreeable to its wishes. The satisfaction of recovering its former possessions was disturbed by the uncertainty of its new plans of conquest. The secret dissension in the Ministry, moreover, between Colloredo, Cobenzl and Spielmann continued, and the Emperor —who as usual troubled himself but little with business, and after his slow and reserved fashion, seldom expressed his will decidedly—manifested more clearly every day his secret dissatisfaction with the position of affairs. Even Colloredo no longer enjoyed his full confidence; but the scientific preceptor of Francis, Schloissnigg,—insignificant as his vain and unpractical character rendered him—obtained a very influential voice in the Cabinet by his readiness on all occasions to flatter the self-sufficiency and ambition of the Emperor. The Ministers had a more than vexatious proof of his influence during this very Belgian campaign. No sooner had the Prince of Coburg driven the French from Liége than he put the Bishopric under imperial sequestration, excluded the episcopal officials from the exercise of their functions, and

paid no attention to the orders of the Bishop himself. This conduct excited no little surprise, and called forth lively opposition from all quarters; but no one was more astonished than the Austrian Ministers, who, not having the slightest intention of pursuing such a course, called the Prince to account for his arbitrary and unwarrantable conduct; they were soon, however, obliged to hold their tongues, when Coburg laid before them in his own justification an order proceeding directly from the Cabinet. They contented themselves by a subsequent compromise of the matter, so that for the present it had no further consequences; but of course such a state of affairs was not well adapted to further the ends of Austrian diplomacy.

The darling wish of the Emperor—the acquisition of Bavaria—was moreover surrounded with ever-increasing difficulties. There was, as we have seen, a moment in January when England seemed favourable to the plan, because it was her object to gain over Austria to the English scheme for saving Poland, and making peace with France. But this whole plan was only too soon rendered impossible by the ardent desire for war which prevailed in the Convention, and forthwith the old disinclination to the Bavarian-Belgian Exchange once more showed itself in London. At the very first conference which Count Stadion held with Lord Grenville on this point in London, the latter declared generally, that no proposals for compensation by the acquisition or exchange of lands, could expect to meet with any favour in England. On the contrary, he said that it was the decided wish of his royal master that projects of that kind—which necessarily exercised an unfavourable influence on general questions—should for the present be postponed, that they might not destroy the most essential condition of victory, a general feeling of confidence among the Powers themselves.[1]

[1] Hacften to Spiegel.

This answer was the more disagreeable to the Court of Vienna the more they felt the want of England's mighty influence to remove the German obstacles to the execution of the plan. After Prussia had consented to the exchange, on the condition that the House of Wittelsbach should give their consent to it, almost everything depended on the resolutions of the Court of Munich. The latter, however, carried on for the time more intimate intercourse with Paris than with Vienna, regarded the plan of exchange as an empty pretext, and had been thrown into a state of violent agitation by the expressions uttered in Vienna about the Imperial ban and sequestration. Bavaria therefore showed nothing but caution and suspicion, and put every conceivable obstacle in the way of the Imperial troops on their march through the country to the Rhine. And thus the anger of the Austrian government at such treasonable conduct to themselves and to the Empire was increased tenfold, while the main subject in hand—the negotiation of the exchange—was rendered more and more difficult. Under these circumstances Spielmann, in spite of the dissuasion of Prussia, continually recurred to the idea of employing force, by which means Bavaria at any rate might for the present be occupied by a military force, as Saxony had been by Prussia in 1756. He regarded this plan as the more justifiable because he thought he saw traces of French influence in South Germany as well as Bavaria, and expressed himself on this subject with inconsiderate zeal. He alluded, in the first place, to Darmstadt, whose Landgrave, however, managed to justify himself against the main charge—the feeble opposition made against Custine in the preceding autumn; but most pointedly to Würtemberg, whose *chargé d'affaires* having asked how his Duke could obtain the favour of the Emperor, received the plain answer—"By doing the very opposite of all that he had hitherto done."[1] Thus at every step the

[1] All this is taken from Haeften's correspondence.

mutual irritation was increased and the plan of exchange was still farther from realization in March than in the previous December. It was in the former month that the Elector, after long negotiation and much hesitation, distinctly refused to deliver up Mannheim to the Imperial troops; a step which was regarded in Vienna as a certain proof of a treacherous understanding with France; and had it not been for their regard for the opinion of Prussia and England, the Imperial cabinet would have immediately proceeded to put Bavaria under sequestration. This state of affairs was well known at Prussian head-quarters, and led the Prussian government to keep a strict watch on the policy of the Emperor. No one at the Court of Berlin viewed the Austrian intentions against Bavaria with any great favour; the most favourable wished at all events to wait and see the course pursued by Austria in the Polish affair, and all were convinced of the necessity of not allowing any act of violence on the part of Austria, or any swerving from the compact made at St. Petersburg. And thus, before the beginning of the French campaign, a feeling arose of the necessity of proceeding with the greatest caution, and of not staking, for the *advantage* of Austria, all those forces, which might perhaps be needed on the following day to meet the *encroachments* of Austria on the Empire. "If Austria can re-conquer the Netherlands" wrote Haugwitz on the 9th of March, "all the better for the Emperor and for us; we wish it sincerely and shall not desert his cause – but we must not forget that it is not our business to lead the way." In these few words we have the key to the whole course of the Coalition war; as long as ground for such mistrust remained, the forces of Germany were condemned to impotence in the struggle with the Revolution.

At the same period Lord Grenville convinced himself that his system of a disinterested struggle with the Revolution would not be accepted at Vienna, and he therefore sought to substitute some other plan of compensation for the dangerous Bavarian one. He declared himself ready to increase the

Austrian possessions in Belgium by a line of French fortresses, and in general to make France pay the expenses of the war.[1] Such an idea began to find favour in Vienna, when—in brilliant contrast to the South German vexations—Coburg gathered laurels upon laurels in Belgium, whose population greeted the double eagle with unbounded joy. Nay, even in Alsace under the tyranny of the Democrats, the liberal burghers and the catholic peasants vied with one another in showing German sympathies, and General Wurmser, who was a native of Alsace, considered himself sure of a rapid conquest of the country by means of his understanding with the inhabitants. Austria therefore, carried on a discussion of this system in London, but without entirely giving up the Bavarian plan; the final decision depended on the further course of events, which the Court of Vienna now watched with increased eagerness.

Meanwhile matters took a very unexpected turn in Belgium. Dumouriez had as little hope of driving the Austrians out of Belgium again, as of gaining an earnest support from the Parisian rulers. His letter of the 12th of March had been received by the French government with furious excitement, which was only appeased for the moment by Danton's energetic interference. Danton, who continually recurred to the plan of drawing over the General to himself and the Centre, offered to go to Belgium, and soon afterwards spoke with the General in Louvain on the 20th,[2] where he urgently

[1] This is first mentioned in a despatch of Sir M. Eden to Lord Grenville, March the 2nd. We shall see that England adhered with unalterable firmness to this plan in opposition to that of the Bavarian exchange. It is therefore the very reverse of truth when Lord Stanhope (*Life of Pitt* II. 203), speaking of the taking of Valenciennes by the Austrians, complains that the Emperor had deserted Pitt's disinterested system. The occupation took place not in spite but in consequence of the English project. — [2] Lacroix's report, *Moniteur*, 22nd February 1794. Dumouriez says 2nd of March, but on this day Danton was already on his way to Paris, and his companion Lacroix was in Ghent with the other Commissioners.

begged him to withdraw his letter of March the 12th, promising him, in case of compliance, the energetic support of all parties. But Dumouriez was too firmly wedded to his plan respecting Belgium, and had quarrelled with Danton on this very point; here, therefore, a concession on his part, was least of all to be expected. Nor did he trust the promises which were made to him. He knew that the very same men had offered the command-in-chief to Lafayette six days after the 10th of August; he did not give them credit for any greater honesty now than at that time, and he indulged in the most violent accusations against the Convention. All that Danton could prevail upon him to do, was to address a short petition to the Assembly to defer their resolution respecting this letter of the 12th, until they should receive further explanations. Danton returned hastily to Paris[1] and there fell into new difficulties.

We shall hereafter become better acquainted with his position there. Having been shortly before intimately connected with Robespierre, he had endeavoured at this time to enter into closer relations with the Gironde, but had quarrelled with them, soon after his return, respecting Dumouriez. For the Gironde still retained an irreconcilable dislike to the General, and had just received from Miranda very decided hints respecting his treacherous plans.[2] Robespierre and Marat entirely agreed on this occasion with their deadly enemies, and Danton found himself completely alone, nay almost compromised, on account of his sympathy for Dumouriez. It was now certain that the breach between the latter and the Convention was irremediable.

Dumouriez on his part was incessantly driven on by the

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[1] According to the *Moniteur* he said in the Convention on the 1st April, that he had arrived in Paris on Friday the 29th; but as, according to Lacroix's letter, he had started from Ghent to Paris on the 22nd, was chosen member of the Committee of Public Safety on the 25th, and made great speeches in the Convention on the 27th, it is evident that we ought to read above, Friday the 22nd. — [2] Miranda to Péthion, March 21st.

course of events. On the 23rd he made his first step towards a reconciliation with his late enemies; he spoke to the adjutant of Coburg, Colonel Mack, concerning an exchange of prisoners, and came to an agreement with him that no further great battles should be fought, that the French should evacuate Brussels, and that further negotiations should then take place. On the 25th he received such unfavourable intelligence from Namur, that he himself ordered the evacuation of the city, and thus the last hope vanished of maintaining at any rate a portion of the Belgian territory. He saw his conquest entirely lost, his reputation destroyed, his army defeated upon French ground, and himself therefore helplessly exposed to his opponents. He was surprised at this time by the arrival of three Commissioners from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, who in a lengthy conference proposed to him to declare himself for the Jacobins, and to supersede the Convention by the Jacobin Club.[1] Was this perhaps a last attempt of Danton to bind Dumouriez to his interests at any cost?—all the other chiefs of the Club only thought of persecuting the General to the death. However that may be, they came too late for their object; it was in Tournay on the evening of the 26th, and Dumouriez had already fixed the following day for his decisive conference with Mack. He was in the greatest state of excitement, expressed himself with bitterness to the three Commissioners concerning the Convention and the Club, and at last granted them a further interview for the next evening after his return from Ath. Distracted by the most contrary and violent passions, he had now at last irrevocably made up his mind. He disclosed to the Austrian Colonel his intention of marching upon Paris, and putting an end to the rule of the Jacobins. He considered himself secure of the good will of

[1] Dumouriez to Beurnonville, March 29th (Read out in the Convention on the 2nd April). To the same effect in the *Mémoires*. In the protocol of the three Commissioners drawn up for the Convention, it would seem as if they only wished to make the General reveal his plans.

the troops of the line, and only asked of Coburg an armistice of fourteen days in which to complete the restoration of the Monarchy. He had thoroughly thought over the object he had in view and the mode of its execution, and unfolded his plan in all its details.[1] He himself was to lead the van, which on its arrival in Paris was to form three divisions; the first was to make itself master of the Convention, the second of the Jacobin Club, and the third of the Temple; whereupon the army was to proclaim the young Dauphin unter the title of Louis XVII. The latter was then to govern with a Constitution formed on the English pattern; and with this view the Nobility were to receive back their estates and form an Upper Chamber, without, however, any stipulation for the restoration of feudal and seigniorial rights. A restoration of the Church to its old possessions was, he said, impossible; but the prerogatives of the King, though not unlimited, would at any rate be greater than in 1791. The General thought it above all thing essential that the Emigrés should not show themselves at all, in order that the nation might not be irritated by the spectacle of the *ancien régime*. He also thought that the interference of foreigners should be kept as much as possible out of sight, not merely out of respect to public opinion, but because he himself laid the greatest weight upon the preservation of national independence. "If I had a hundred lives I would stake them all to put an end to the atrocities of the Jacobins; and if I had a thousand I would sacrifice them likewise to prevent any foreign power, or any Emigré from giving laws to my country." It was only in case his own forces should prove insufficient for the march upon Paris, that Coburg was to lend him military aid; in return for which he was to occupy Lille and Valenciennes until the conclusion of peace.

These overtures, at which Louis Philippe of Chartres was

[1] The following is taken from a despatch of Tauenzien to the King of Prussia.

present, clearly proved that Dumouriez had no idea of elevating the house of Orleans; it is also self-evident that such a scheme was excluded by the cooperation of the allies. Dumouriez told the three Commissioners the whole truth, when he once more admitted them to his presence late in the evening at Tournai; and treated the hint thrown out concerning Orleanistic intrigues as a silly calumny. In fact he was in the mood of a man who has broken down all the bridges behind him, and has gained firmness and security from the fixedness of his resolution. He indulged in a lively description of the worthlessness of the Convention, of the robber government in Paris, and the fidelity of the army, which, he said, would follow him like a troop of Mamelukes against the criminals of the capital. To their proposal that he should place himself at the head of the Jacobins and consequently of the Republic, he replied by the counsel that the Jacobins should compensate for their past enormities by a revolt against the Convention, and the liberation of the Royal family; and he dismissed them with directions to let him know the resolution of the Club within five days.

This frankness has been called inconceivable, and regarded as the cause of his failure. But his plans had been well-known in the capital for several day; for as he had first of all to assure himself of the fidelity of his troops, conspiracy or secrecy were impossible, and several democratic officers had long ago sent information to Paris.[1] If the army remained true to him, the Convention, in spite of their knowledge of his intentions, had simply no means of opposing him; and nothing is more certain than that the troops of the line, the only important part of the army, entirely shared at that time (on the 28th) the feelings of their commander.

[1] The names of those officers are given. As early as the 21st the Conventional Commissioners in Lille had discussed the question of arresting the General. Lacroix, *l. c.*

They had not been won but insulted by the anarchical laws of Dubois-Crancé; they surrounded their General with loud cries of approbation, and when he spoke quite openly of his plans against Paris, and some of the Volunteers threatened his person on that account on the 31st, all the regiments loudly manifested their indignation and devotion. What then was the reason which prevented him from immediately following up his threats with deeds?

He has himself given us this reason: it is the same which successively destroyed Lafayette, Dumouriez and the Gironde. Bold and skilful as they were in works of destruction, they showed themselves inexperienced and wavering when they tried to enter upon an opposite course. Dumouriez, who had never yet shrunk from any undertaking however hazardous, or from the sacrifice of human life, now hesitated to disarm the volunteers by means of the troops of the line. The latter were quite ready for this enterprise; they despised the disorderly gangs who had shown themselves such robbers in the open country, and such cowards during the retreat; and considering the wild disorder of the volunteers, there was no doubt that they had the necessary power. But Dumouriez apprehended a frightful carnage from a collision of these two forces; whereas at any other time he would have considered that such a struggle would irrevocably bind the troops to himself. He once more, therefore, previously endeavoured to sound the public feeling at Paris, and wrote on the 28th to Beurnonville about the moderation of the Austrians,—who were ready to make peace if internal order were restored,—and called upon him to weigh these matters with the great Committees of the Convention. But there was no longer a single person in Paris who had either the courage or the inclination to advocate his cause. His opponents, on the other hand, were men who recoiled from no means however horrible; the murderous attack on Dumouriez of the 31st had been instigated by the Committee of Public Safety itself, and all the resources of violence, cunning and seduc-

tion, had been set in motion against him.[1] His position grew worse every hour. After he had retreated step by step before the Austrians, he now stood upon French ground near St. Amand and Maulde. Here, on the Northern frontier, everything had been done during the past year to exclude from the hearts of the people every feeling but the love of country. The great majority of them, it is true, were full of constitutional hatred against the Parisian democrats,[2] but the sole fact that Dumouriez was in treaty with the national enemy was sufficient to ruin him in their opinion, and to place all resources at the absolute disposal of the Conventional Commissioners. Every kind of influence was brought to bear on the garrisons of Lille, Condé and Valenciennes, and they declared decidedly for the Convention; these fortresses were lost to Dumouriez. In the army itself very awkward symptoms of disaffection appeared, and some of the Generals — *e. g.* Dampierre — conducted themselves towards Dumouriez as he had done in August towards Lafayette. The troops would have nothing to do with an English Constitution, but only with the French one of 1791, which the course of events had made the only possible rallying point of the liberal friends of order at this period. It was above all, the constant secrecy of Dumouriez's negotiations with the Austrians, which awakened an ever-increasing and extending suspicion against him. And indeed, though he might consider himself secured by Coburg's promises against any ambitious views on the part of the Austrians, the troops, who were likewise not inclined to betray their country, had every reason for demanding a similar guarantee. In this

[1] The report of Fabre to the Convention (April 3rd) leaves no doubt on this point in the mind of any one who chooses to see it. On the 14th Aug. 1793, five of those Volunteers were introduced to the Convention, loaded with praise for their murderous attack on the traitor, and presented with 6,000 francs. The protocols of the ministerial council contain detailed accounts of subsequent attempts to murder Dumouriez. — [2] The documentary evidence will be given below.

state of universal uncertainty, instead of a favourable answer to Dumouriez's letter of the 28th, intelligence was suddenly brought that the Minister at War with four Conventional Commissioners had arrived to summon the General to Paris, and in case of refusal to depose and arrest him. They followed close upon their courier, and the decisive moment came. Dumouriez had no choice. After a short conference the Commissioners pronounced sentence of suspension against him; he caused them to be arrested and delivered up to the Austrians. The troops immediately greeted him with applause, but the giving up of the Commissioners to the enemy —which was done out of regard to the Royal family, for whose safety they were to serve as hostages—had a bad effect. And this day was lost in correspondence with Coburg, with whom a conference was agreed upon for the 4th. The regiments, particularly the artillery, became more refractory; and the volunteers ran back to Valenciennes breathing vengeance against the traitor. Three of their battalions met the General on his way to the Prince of Coburg, fired upon him, and chased him for several leagues. Having narrowly escaped, he declared to the Prince that nothing but the Constitution of 1791 would be accepted, and that it was above all things necessary that Austria should make a solemn declaration that she had no intention of making conquests in France. This Coburg promised, and we shall see from what motives; but the time when it could have produced any effect was irrevocably past. After the skirmish above mentioned, it was reported by some that he had been killed, and by others that he had deserted to the Austrians. Whereupon the artillery left their camp at 5 o'clock in the morning, to march to the Commissioners of the Convention in Valenciennes; their example was soon followed, and the defection became general. It was of no avail that Dumouriez returned into the camp, now attended by an Austrian escort. He had no other alternative than to escape to the Austrians,

with a few faithful followers. He was followed during the next few days by about 1,800 men.[1]

And thus this splendid meteor of the Revolution was hopelessly extinguished. He was a man richly endowed by nature with intellect, strength of will, and restless energy. Having grown up with all the accomplishments and vices of the *ancien régime*,—in which he was trained to intrigue and love of pleasure, and divested of all moral principle,—his ambition was developed to gigantic proportions by the fiery breath of the Revolution, and we see him rushing along untrodden and dizzy paths, often on the very brink of crime, and with frivolous audacity tampering with the fate of his country. Yet we cannot altogether condemn him; nay, we often turn away with pleasure from the other chiefs of the Revolution to contemplate his image. And that, not merely because he had no sympathy with the bloodthirsty assassins of September—which is no small praise—nor because he saved France at Valmy, and taught her to conquer at Jemappes—for we know how greatly his efforts were aided by others, and by singular good fortune. But although he was neither a Statesman nor a General of the highest order, he had self-sacrificing courage and inexhaustible energy; and at these pure fountains the sterling worth of his nature was refreshed and renewed, whatever dark and troubled waves might pass over it. He disdained to take part in the mob tyranny of Paris, but he was not strong enough to seize the only alternative—the establishment of a military dictatorship. He fell, and with him fell the last remnant of the old French army. Three years were needed to create the new army, which then fulfilled his predictions concerning it.

For the present, therefore, it was all over with the march to Paris. Nevertheless for a war in favour of Louis XVII.—for a war such as the Emperor Leopold had contemplated

[1] According to Tauenzien. Dampierre subsequently stated the number to the Convention at 6—700.

in his last days—Dumouriez would have been no despicable ally. It would even now have been worth while trying the effect of the too long delayed declaration on the part of Austria, and to afford him the necessary support to enable him to raise the banner of the Constitution in France. But time pressed, and Coburg weighed the matter in the most painful state of doubt and indecision. His own views entirely coincided with those of Dumouriez. He did not belong to the Generals of Joseph's school who indulged in far-reaching schemes of conquest; he had already seen the bitter fruits of these in the Turkish war, and now, in the midst of his victorious course, he was full of anxious cares about the future. He found himself upon hostile ground, far removed from all his resources, with about 32,000 men, and threatened on all sides by a general national resistance. It is true that re-inforcements were on their way from various quarters—10,000 Prussians, 6,000 Hessians, 7,000 English and 13,000 Hanoverians; but it was just as certain, on the other side, that the French would take up arms with general enthusiasm, and that far superior masses of troops would be raised by the efforts of the revolutionists. Although he was by no means thoroughly informed as to the views of his own Court, yet he knew how many antagonistic aims, and how many germs of inward strife, were contained in the great Alliance. He was prepared to enter on a new contest with pleasure, but the conviction of his reason only tended towards the wish for an honourable conclusion of the unhappy war. His mental horizon was not extensive, nor was he a man of creative ideas, or easy versatility; he was not in any respect a man of great mind, but he had sound sense and courage, and he was one of many whose reputation was at that time undeservedly destroyed by the crooked policy of his Court.

We see that he regarded the revolutionary war in nearly the same light as the Prussian Court, whose representative at his head-quarters, Count Tauenzien, therefore, enjoyed

his full confidence, and contributed not a little to confirm his resolution. On the first intelligence of Dumouriez's plans, the King, remembering Valmy, had exhorted him to caution; subsequently, however, being better informed than Coburg of the intentions of Austria, he ordered his officials to remain completely passive. But Tauenzien, acting on his knowledge of the secret wishes of the King, had eagerly urged the Prince to issue the manifesto demanded by Dumouriez, to declare himself the ally of the friends of order in France, and in the name of his Emperor solemnly to renounce all ideas of conquest. And thus the Field Marshall put the last stroke to this important act, which was published on the 5th of April. With a somewhat heavy heart he then started for Antwerp with Mack and Tauenzien, where a conference of Austrian, English and Dutch statesmen was assembled on the 7th to determine on their future proceedings. On the part of England appeared the Duke of York, Commander of the English auxiliaries, and Lord Auckland, English ambassador at the Hague. Austria was represented by Count Metternich, the Austrian Minister in Belgium, and Count Stahremberg the Ambassador; Holland, by the hereditary Prince of Orange and the Grand Pensionary van Spiegel; Count Keller, the Prussian Ambassador at the Hague, was present as *persona muta*. Coburg laid his aims and reasons before this assembly; once more was the original object of the war—defence against the Revolution—pressed upon the memory of the Austrian Government, and was on this occasion recommended by her own commander-in-chief, by the most important of her late enemies, and by the well-known inclinations of her most powerful ally. But we already know the ideas which prevailed in Vienna; not a syllable of doubt was heard, not a moment of consideration was allowed in the Congress at Antwerp. On the contrary, a general displeasure manifested itself at the close of Coburg's address, and it was immediately resolved, almost without discussion, that the altered circum-

stances of the case demanded the issue of a new manifesto and the recall of the former one. In the evening Count Metternich brought forward the draft of a plan, which was received with applause, because it answered the object in view, and did not too openly compromise Coburg. Mack made one more attempt to explain and justify the views of his General, and he added that if the Powers desired a restoration of order and monarchy in France, the support of Dumouriez was evidently the best means of attaining that object; but if they aimed at a partition of France they must of course set Dumouriez aside, and make up their minds to many a campaign and many a siege. His words of course produced not the slightest effect. Every thing connected with Dumouriez's plan was rejected, and Coburg had to listen to many cutting and bitter words, charging him with having averted the utter ruin of the beaten French army by his credulous negotiations. When this matter had been settled, the Conference proceeded to consider, in a consultation which lasted many days, how the misfortune was to be made good, and the war carried on with success. After having counted up the contingents, they deliberated whether they should be formed into one large army; but this idea was given up because it was uncertain to which of the Princes present—the Duke of York or the Prince of Coburg—the command-in-chief would fall. When they then came to deliberate further on the plan of the campaign and the disposition of the forces, the Duke was first asked whether he could occupy the country between Ostend and Menin, and thus form the right wing of the combined army. He immediately agreed to this, emphatically declaring that his instructions would just enable him to do so. The limitation implied in these words was more fully explained by Lord Auckland, who said that the Duke was empowered to operate in common with the Imperial army only where sieges were concerned; since it was the object of his Court to procure for Belgium a defensive line of fortresses on the

frontier. "I will not conceal the fact," he added, "that England too contemplates a very considerable compensation for herself." The Prince of Orange then threw out the remark, that if all the world was looking for compensation, he hoped that Holland would not be excluded, and that her ambassadors would be admitted to any Congress that might take place.[1]

After this they exchanged some edifying information respecting the sums of money which had been invested in England by Dumouriez, Péthion and their associates, and had just been confiscated by the Authorities; they then discussed a number of military details and broke up the Conference. On the 9th, Coburg published Metternich's declaration, by which, "in consequence of the persistent stubborness of the French," he withdrew his former manifesto, and proclaimed an unconditional state of war, and consequently—in virtue of the recall of his previous summons of the 5th—a war of conquest against France. The scheme which had been in preparation since September was hereby publicly revealed in the face of all Europe; it was now proclaimed that the war no longer aimed at the restoration of the French throne and the security of Europe, but the conquest of French provinces and the aggrandizement of the Powers. The effect produced in France was great and general, and in every respect favourable to the democratic rulers. They had constantly maintained that this was always the object of the Allies, and now triumphantly asked whether they had not been fully justified in denouncing the King and the Emigrés, the Feuillants and Dumouriez, who had all coquetted with the foreign robbers, as traitors to their country. Henceforward, indeed, the Convention was stamped as the representative of the national cause; all opposition to it became treason, and Dumouriez was morally annihilated in the eyes of his countrymen. At a time when nothing

[1] Tauenzien's report to the King.

was more important to the Allies than the support of the friends of order in France, they made it impossible for any lover of his country to rise in alliance with them against the tyranny of the Democrats. By changing the political object of the Coalition they destroyed their most important political support in the coming struggle.

And this was done by a Coalition, none of whose members had the slightest inclination to make sacrifices for the war, but mutually tried to shift its burdens and exertions on to each others shoulders, and in the depth of their hearts grudged one another the gain which might accrue from the contest. It was done, moreover, in the presence of a Revolution which had just made itself master of all the goods, the powers, and the persons, of a great nation, and was on the point of filling the scene of action with innumerable armies. At the Antwerp Conference they imagined that the more eagerly the French lacerated one another in the revolutionary turmoil, the more safely and comfortably the Allies might indulge in the conquest of the border lands. They entirely overlooked the fact, that from a military point of view there was but one means of victory—the immediate following up of the advantages gained for the moment; in other words, a rapid march upon Paris, before the Convention had completed its mighty armaments. It was in vain that Edmund Burke explained the real nature of the case with all the force of his eloquence.[1] Nay, in some quarters a notion existed that the restoration of order in France ought to be avoided, because the Powers could not decently deprive their friends the Bourbons of their provinces and fortresses.

No one, after all, was more deeply impressed with the ruinous character of such a system than the very man on whose shoulders the principal part in the execution of it rested—the Prince of Coburg. Full of grief and indignation

[1] His correspondence of the year 1793 is full of this subject.

he returned from Antwerp to his head-quarters, so firmly fixed in his convictions, that in spite of the vexations he had lately suffered, he determined to make an attempt to open a negotiation with the Convention itself. After the arrest of the Commissioners above refered to, their colleagues had written to him from Lille, demanded their release, and loaded Dumouriez with abuse; whereupon Coburg, in a polite though unfavourable answer attempted to defend this French General. On the 12th of April a Lieutenant-Colonel Cherin appeared at his outposts, as bearer of several documents; *viz.* a confidential letter of the Commissioners—in which they upheld their charges against Dumouriez, but in other respects expressed themselves so moderately that the Convention subsequently took great offence at it—and further, a public letter, which was filled with all the more republican bluster, to make up for the mildness of the private one. It talked of Hannibal and the Romans, and the triumph of liberty, and threatened the despots with 80,000 armed Parisians. Coburg received the Envoy in the presence of Colonel Mack, and began the conference by expressing his regret that France should, by the employment of such language, cut off every chance of peace. He then asked why the French would not accept the Constitution of 1791, and thereby appease the enmity of Europe. They had every reason, observed Mack, to seek a reconciliation, since England had already agreed to a considerable extension of territory on the part of Austria. After exchanging a few sharp remarks concerning Dumouriez, Colonel Mack made another step in advance. As Coburg had just learned at Antwerp how little his own government was inclined to peace, it seemed to him important to point out to the French another handle to the affair. "The Prince," said Mack, "was sorry that he was no longer permitted to speak as negotiator but only as general, but he was sincerely desirous of peace, and if the French Government were animated by the same sentiments, they would do well to address themselves

to the King of Prussia." "The King," interposed Coburg, "is favourably disposed, very accessible, and an upright man." "He has," added Mack, "at this moment, a decisive influence." Cherin, having no authority to consider overtures of this kind, endeavoured to break off the conference. Mack repeated: "remember that you have to open a negotiation, and that you should first address yourselves to Prussia." When Cherin took his leave, Mack once more endeavoured to add weight to his representations. "Do not think of the Emigrés, whom the Emperor no longer tolerates in his army; make up your minds to treat with Prussia, and to resign your conquests"—"Mayence," interrupted Coburg, "and the rest of the territory of the Empire—and then there is hope of an armistice, from which a Congress and straight forward negotiations may arise."[1]

These were the same conditions which Prussia had already laid down in October 1792, the acceptance of which would now have been greeted by her with double pleasure. Cherin, too, faithfully executed his commission, but he naturally laboured under the false idea that the desire of peace was chiefly to be sought on the side of Austria. The Convention then passed a vote of censure on the Commissioners for having entered into any correspondence with the enemy at all. But this warlike pride was only a piece of bravado, calculated for the Parisian mob; for the present rulers, deeply convinced of the danger of their position, took the words of the Austrian General into serious consideration.[2]

Unhappily for Europe, however, the very corner stone of Coburg's plan—the good understanding between Austria and Prussia, which was equally necessary for the conduct of war or the conclusion of peace—was just at this moment dashed to pieces. On the same day on which Coburg concluded his final agreement with Dumouriez—the 27th of

[1] Cherin's report in the papers of the Committee of Public Safety. —
[2] *Conf.* Conv. Nat., April 19, Report of Dampierre's Adjutant.

March—the unhappy Polish business had brought on a change in Vienna, which completely alienated the policy of Austria, both from Coburg's views and the Prussian alliance.

On the 23rd, namely, the Treaty of St. Petersburg was made known in Vienna by the Ambassadors of Russia and Prussia, and had roused a storm of consternation, anger and jealousy among the Austrian Statesmen. "I shall immediately report the matter to the Emperor," said Cobenzl, "but I can say at once what his opinion will be; I know not what to think; it is so important a thing—so entirely apart from all former negotiations—that I cannot yet master all its bearings." When the Ambassador reminded him of the discussions which had taken place in Mayence, in Merle, and in Vienna itself, he replied that there had indeed been some talk on these occasions of Prussian acquisitions in Poland, but that he had forgotten their extent, as no agreement had been come to; and that what had then been proposed was mere child's play when compared to such an enormous accession of territory. This alleged weakness of memory was evidently only a blind to conceal the real seat of his vexation. It was not the extent of the Polish provinces which the two Powers destined for themselves that excited his displeasure, for their intentions in this respect had been known to him ever since the negotiations in December; what affected him so deeply was the rapid realization of the Prussian gains, while those of Austria were still uncertain and dependent on a thousand contingencies. It was the conclusion of so important a treaty behind the back of the Austrian Government, which implied a decided victory of Prussian influence in St. Petersburg. And lastly, it was the palpable mark of the defeat of the Austrian policy—the insignificance of the share allotted to the Emperor, when compared with the rich booty of the two other Powers. Francis II. could not pardon his Statesmen for being thus outwitted, and as he could not directly punish his Ambassador in Russia, and thereby entirely break with the latter's

patroness, the Empress Catharine, his displeasure fell with the greater force upon the Ministers themselves who had given the Ambassador his instructions, and had devised no expedient for warding off the evil. This time Colloredo had no difficulty in unhorsing his rivals, Cobenzl and Spielmann at once. It was quite after the manner of Francis II. that he received them, on the 27th, with smiling graciousness, and took leave of them with greater friendliness than ever, and that on their return home from the Hofburg they found their written *congés*. He liberally provided them with pensions and subordinate offices; but they were for ever excluded from the conduct of affairs. On the recommendation of the still influential Count Mercy they were succeeded by the Baron von Thugut, as Chief of the Foreign office—the man to whom France owes her victory in the Revolutionary war, and Austria her present position in Europe.[1]

Thugut, like Spielmann, was a man of low birth; the former being the son of a skipper on the Danube, the latter of a shoemaker in Vienna. Having attracted attention in early life by his extraordinary ability, he was recommended by his teachers, the Viennese Jesuits, to the Ministry, and quickly rose in the diplomatic service. In every position he manifested acuteness and courage, a talent for intrigue, and contempt for danger. He always pursued his object with singleness of purpose, unchecked by fear, or love of pleasure, or conscientious scruples. He had been seen equally undaunted amidst a furious revolt of the people in the streets

[1] That the treaty of St. Petersburg was the cause of the change in the Ministry is positively stated in the Reports of the Prussian Ambassadors, and confirmed by Haeften on the 18th of May. That Mercy decided the choice of the Emperor in favour of Thugut we gather from the correspondence of Mercy's intimate friend, Lord Auckland (III. 235). Hormayr's account of the intrigue of Colloredo and Madame de Poutet may thus be completed. On the other hand, all that Hormayr says in the "*Lebensbilder*" respecting Thugut's personal qualities is confirmed by those despatches, and by subsequent events.

of Constantinople, and in a stormy night upon the Bosphorus. In Warsaw he made his way by alternate pliancy and energy, and a tact which was never at fault, between the venal Nobility, the powerless King, and the overbearing insolence of the Russian Ambassador. And finally he saw the ancient Court of Versailles in the last blaze of its splendour, and brought away with him the conviction, in regard to the Revolution, that a mob of scoundrels would not have overturned the throne, if the listless gentlemen of the *ancien régime* had not been too weak to fight in its defence. Reserved and imperturbable he retained his coolness, and therefore his superiority, under all circumstances. Frugal and sober he appeared to be subject to no weaknesses, and to have scarcely any wants—his regular supper consisted of a little fruit and a glass of water. Those who knew him best were unable to find out anything which he respected. Though he made great use of Crown and Church as means of obtaining political power, he set no value on either religion or legitimacy; and Catharine II., who knew him as well as he knew her, exclaimed on hearing of his appointment, that a Jacobin had become Minister, who would soon come to an agreement with his brethren in Paris.[1]

She was right to this extent, that Thugut was never obstructed in his political schemes by any fixed political principles. The despotic germ which Nature had implanted in his breast, had been reared to full maturity by the external circumstances of his life. Among the Turks and Poles, as well as in the great world at Paris, he had learnt to look on policy as a mixture of unprincipled intrigues, brutal violence, and venal selfishness. He regarded human nature with cold and unmingled contempt, and was fully convinced that self-love was the only motive of men's actions. He himself, therefore, had no object but power, and knew no other means of attaining it than working on the fears of some,

[1] Hogguer, Ap. 16th.

and the self-interest of others—and he acknowledged no other standard than success. By these sentiments he had recommended himself to the young Emperor, who sympathised with them at the bottom of his heart, and the Austrian Court promised itself great results from the vigorous and manly guidance which had succeeded to the administration of the sleepy Cobenzl, and the narrow-minded Spielmann.

Here too, indeed, they were to learn by experience that penetration, courage and intrigue, can only receive political value from a connexion with some great aim—that the worship of selfishness does not raise, but rather unnerves the able man. This worship had long ago deprived Thugut of the love of labour, falsified his judgments respecting persons and events, and excited in him indifference or disgust for all human affairs. At first his colleagues saw with satisfaction with how much keener penetration than his predecessors he discharged the business of his office—with what precision and energy he acted on every occasion—and what an accurate knowledge of men's views and feelings he displayed.[1] But this elasticity was soon relaxed; it was still observed, indeed, that the new Minister was skilfully and diligently employed in gaining exclusive influence over the Emperor, but in other respects, now that he had attained his object, his contempt for the world made him sluggish and undecided. He allowed the reports to accumulate, left applications unanswered, and every kind of business in arrear. He gave the last finish to the avaricious character which Francis II. had given to his policy, and was as little able as the Emperor himself to choose between the objects of his desire. "He seems to me," said Napoleon, four years afterwards, "to possess but little skill, to see but little way before him, and to interfere in everything; he mixes him-

[1] Haeften's despatches during April and May are full of these sentiments.

self up with the intrigues of all Europe, without following out any kind of plan."[1]

The first attention of the new Minister was directed to the subject—the treatment or neglect of which had led to the fall of his predecessors—of the Polish affair, and the question of compensations in general. Angry as he was with Prussia and Russia, he had recourse first of all to the only friendly Power in Europe, and sought to secure from it a sure support. One of the veterans of diplomacy, Count Mercy, received directions, on the 29th of March, to repair to London, and signify to the Government the adhesion of Austria to the English view of the general character and objects of the war—*viz.* that no interference with the French Constitution was intended, but only resistance to French encroachments; and he was directed to propose a firm cooperation of the two Powers for these objects. As a recompense for this concession he was first and foremost to ask for England's consent to the Bavarian-Belgian Exchange. Austria, on her side, would do all in her power to carry out the wishes of England by capturing a line of French fortresses. Of these some were to be annexed to the new Belgian State as a protection, while Austria—which, it was said, obtained a very insufficient acquisition in Belgium—was only to receive in addition a few places in Alsace. Thugut expressly observed in these instructions, that England's support in the matter of the Belgian-Bavarian Exchange, was all the more urgently necessary, because, in case of her refusing it, Austria would be compelled to seek a Polish province, which might easily lead to infinite complications.

On the 4th of April, five days after the drawing up of this document, the Minister held his first conference with the Ambassadors of Prussia and Russia respecting the treaty of St. Petersburg. It contained, as we know, the promise of the two Powers—in case the Emperor would guarantee

[1] Corresp. inedite, VI. 4.

the Polish acquisitions—to assist him in the Bavarian Exchange. If we compare this stipulation with Mercy's instructions, the way to a general settlement of the affair seems clearly pointed out. Austria should have agreed to the treaty of St. Petersburg, on condition that some French border fortresses were thrown into the bargain in addition to the Bavarian Exchange. If the two Courts agreed to this, the object was attained, and the grand Alliance was firmly concluded; if they declined it, Austria would have manifested her good will, and be relieved from all responsibility for the evil consequences of the disagreement. But such a proceeding seemed to the Imperial Minister too straight forward and simple to be wise. He may have thought that the Bavarian Exchange would still be uncertain as long as the Courts of London and Munich appeared adverse to it; and that he must therefore revive all his claims in every quarter, and for the present refuse all concessions. In his reply to the Russian and Prussian Ambassadors, therefore, he stated in direct contradiction to the instructions of Mercy, that in the face of the entire want of consideration which had been shown by the two Powers, the Emperor's honour imperatively called upon him to give up her Bavarian plan of exchange, and to demand in its stead a French border district, and a Polish province; in other words, he entirely rejected the treaty of St. Petersburg. Nor did he content himself with mere words, but immediately set to work to throw real obstacles in the way of the Polish partition. The Austrian *Chargé d'affaires* in Warsaw, Du Caché, was instructed not to follow King Stanislaus to Grodno, and, in general, to abstain from lending any support to the measures of Russia and Prussia. Whereupon Du Caché by no means contented himself with such a passive attitude, but openly assured the Polish patriots that they possessed the full favour of Francis II., who was only prevented for the moment from lending them his active assistance. This led to a violent scene between the Austrian Chargé and General

Igelström, in which Du Caché somewhat softened the matter by a few conciliatory remarks, without, however, subsequently denying his decided hostility to the partitioning Powers.

In the midst of this general suspense and disagreement, the news of the late warlike events in Belgium—the defection of Dumouriez, and the disordered state of the French army—arrived in Vienna. Thugut cordially approved of the resolutions of the Antwerp Conference, and emphatically rejected the disinterested system of the Prince of Coburg. He beheld with lively satisfaction the defenceless state of the French, which seemed to place the capture of the border fortresses beyond a doubt. He therefore sent for the English Ambassador, Sir Morton Eden, enlarged to him on the state of Europe, and expressed the desire of the Emperor to enter into a formal alliance with England. Sir Morton entered with the greatest readiness on the consideration of so friendly a proposal; but he clearly informed the Minister, that while England was willing to allow him to make the richest acquisitions at the expense of France—the first line of border fortresses, as well as Lorraine and Alsace—she would under no circumstances consent to the Bavarian Exchange. Thugut showed himself very tractable on this point. If England, he said, would conclude a firm alliance with Austria, the Emperor might be induced to insist no further on the Bavarian Exchange, although he could not bind himself never to take it up again. He added a long account of the Russian encroachments in Poland, and sounded the Cabinet in London to see whether it was inclined to oppose the partition of Poland, and by what means. We see how he endeavoured to gain the help of England against the Northern Powers, by a provisional renunciation of Bavaria, and yet even here to reserve all his claims for the future.[1]

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[1] *Conf.* also the despatches which passed between the English Minister and Lord Auckland during the month of April (Correspondence of Lord Auckland, III. p. 1—50) in which all those *velléités* of the Austrian policy

If we look to the gist of all these tortuous declarations, it is evident that the rupture of the grand Alliance against the Revolution was commencing in all quarters. Prussia had from the first made the acquisition of a Polish province the condition of her military aid. The more firmly she had reckoned—since the negotiation in Vienna—on the consent of Austria, the more completely did she consider herself released by Thugut's measures from all her Federal obligations, in case of an aggressive war against France. But it is plain to every one that, considering the relative forces of different States at that time, the aid of Prussia was simply indispensable to Austria, and that the possible good will of England would by no means compensate for the want of it. It is difficult, therefore, to conceive a more mischievous contrast than the destruction of the treaty with Prussia on the one hand, and the taking up the English plan of conquest on the other. There was evidently but one course open for Austria. Whether she wished to save, or assist in conquering, Poland, peace must be made with France. And, *vice versa*, the Polish partition must he consented to, if the plan of making acquisitions in France was followed out. But instead of this, simultaneously to dissolve the alliance with Prussia—to quarrel with Catharine and Frederick William about Poland—to close every avenue to a peace with France—and not even decidedly and sincerely to meet the wishes of England, the sole remaining ally—is it possible to conceive a line of policy on the part of Austria more calculated to bring her into a complicated and dangerous position?

Let us now see under what circumstances this new turn of affairs became known at the Prussian head-quarters, and what effect it produced there.

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are disclosed in order. England continually protests against the Bavarian Exchange, promises to help in acquiring French border fortresses for Austria, and complains of the vagueness of Austrian aims.

Two days before the change of Ministers in Vienna, the King of Prussia, according to his agreement with Coburg, had commenced operations against Custine. After a Prussian division had proceeded up the Rhine from Coblentz, and an Austrian division had marched from Trêves over the Hundsrück to Baumholder, the main body of the Prussians crossed the Rhine at Bacharach, on the 25th and 26th, took the direction of the river Nahe, and compelled Custine to retreat rapidly towards the South. No engagement was fought on a grand scale, since Brunswick moved forward with his usual circumspection. A battle which the Hereditary Prince of Hohenlohe fought at Waldalgesheim was sufficient to show the superiority of the German troops, and to make Custine give up every thought of serious resistance. He now commanded all the troops in the Palatinate and Alsace, and was moreover told to look for support to the Army of the Moselle, then under the command of General Ligneville. The latter, however, after the march of the Austrians into the Hundsrück, had withdrawn the outposts which he had pushed forward towards the South, and Custine did not fail to make the consequent exposure of his left flank his excuse in Paris for retreating. But what weighed far more with him was the wretched character of his troops which consisted of ill-provided regulars, inexperienced national guards, and mutinous volunteers—who at every attack of the Prussians lost, not their courage, but their order, and fled almost without a blow before the vigorous cavalry charges of the enemy. The German columns, therefore, spread themselves over the beautiful plains of the Palatinate, and were everywhere welcomed by the inhabitants as liberators and restorers. The retreat of the French was conducted with such haste that a division of 8,000 men—which was on its way from Mayence to Custine's head-quarters—to the equal surprise of themselves and the Prussians, fell in with the King and Hohenlohe instead of their own General. The Hereditary Prince then attacked them vigorously with a few hastily col-

lected battalions, and drove them back to Mayence. And when Wurmser also,—who had been delayed by useless formalities, and misplaced distrust against Prussia, on the part of Bavaria—at last approached with 14,000 men and crossed the Rhine not far from Spires, Custine hastened to evacuate the Palatinate entirely, and to take up a position with about 40,000 men behind the Lauter, in the lines of Weissenburg —that chain of fieldworks which forms the Northern frontier of Alsace from the Vosges to the Rhine. The internal demoralization of his forces was complete. On the march to Weissenburg, one regiment passed a vote of want of confidence against its Colonel; and when Custine blamed the ringleader, an ambitious captain, for exciting the soldiers, the offender, with perfect impunity, cut him short by saying that the Colonel was an aristocrat, but that he, the captain, had the soul of a Brutus.[1] Another captain went to Custine, and denounced him as a traitor, presenting a pistol at his head with the words—"for thee or for me." When Custine told him to fire, he shot himself in the mouth.[2]

The first task of the Prussians after these events was the siege of Mayence, which was surrounded on every side. By the driving back of those 8,000 Frenchmen, the garrison of this place had been raised to the extraordinary number of 22,000, so that in consideration of the great extent of the place and the outworks, the corps destined for the attack had to be increased, not to 20,000, as had been intended, but to 33,000 men. This made the King all the more urgent with the Prince of Coburg to send up the 15,000 men from Belgium, which had been promised in Frankfort; but he was immediately informed that Coburg could only dispose of 30,000 men, and therefore could not spare a single soldier. He then demanded compensation from the military chest of the Empire for the Landgrave of Hesse Cassel, who had

[1] *Moniteur*, April 10th. — [2] Correspondence of the Army of the Rhine. In Custine's trial too the occurrence plays a part.

once more furnished 6000 men for the army; whereupon Coburg brought forward proofs of the utter exhaustion of the fund in question. The missing links in the chain of beleaguering forces round Mayence were gradually supplied by various contingents. A few Darmstadt and some Imperial battalions, and at last—in consequence of some very strong representations—even Bavarian troops were sent, though the Elector could with difficulty make up his mind to endanger his relations with France. "He ought to see," said Lucchesini with sarcastic politeness, "that according to our Gothic constitution a Prince of the Empire may carry on war with his troops, and at the same time yet remain neutral with his territories." All these circumstances naturally tended to cool the joyful enthusiasm of victory, with which the soil of Germany had been cleared of its invaders. But what was the surprise of the generals, when they received intelligence of the Antwerp Conference, and of England's plan, according to which the Emperor was not to exchange Belgium for Bavaria, but to keep the former, and that too with considerable additions! From all other quarters they had hitherto heard that the Emperor zealously continued his exertions to gain possession of Bavaria. The heir to the Bavarian dominions, Duke Maximilian of Deux-Ponts, had just come into the camp, and was moving heaven and earth to prevent the exchange. Lord Elgin, too, who was present at head-quarters as Plenipotentiary of England, remarked in a private audience the anxiety with which the Duke begged him to implore the King of England, to protest, as Elector of Hanover, against the translation of the House of Wittelsbach to Brussels.[1] His conduct betrayed only too clearly the apprehension of immediate violence. Taken in connection with the intelligence from Antwerp, it awakened the suspicion afresh that Bavaria was to be suddenly inundated by the Austrian reserves, whose lingering in their own country, at

[1] Lord Elgin to Grenville, April 19th.

a time when Coburg was so weak, was inexplicable, but became perfectly intelligible on the above supposition. The Prince of Nassau-Siegen,—who as an agent of Russia enjoyed at this time the King's confidence in a very high degree, and in his noisy rattling way divulged the secret thoughts of the rulers,—openly declared that the occupation of Bavaria by the Austrians could never be allowed.

Under these circumstances the King of Prussia received from Vienna the announcement of Thugut's declaration against the Treaty of St. Petersburg, and soon afterwards Buchholtz's report of the hostile proceedings of the Austrian *Chargé d'affaires* in Warsaw. The impression made was as deep and painful as possible. The King wrote to Tauenzien, that His Imperial Majesty was in a very bad humour in consequence of the advantages which his old ally had gained. But the Prussian Ministry, in their reply to Vienna, enquired upon which of the treaties Thugut grounded the charge of want of consideration? If Austria continued hostile in regard to the Polish affair, the Prussian Cabinet felt itself entirely relieved from all responsibilities which went beyond the February treaty, and the defence of the Empire—in other words, from their engagement to furnish more than a contingent of 20,000 men. It was resolved, for the present, to continue the siege of Mayence, as an important fortress of the German Empire, but to make all further steps towards an attack on France dependent on the conduct of the Emperor. The war of the Coalition was in fact even then—only four weeks after its commencement—at an end. To Poland the immediate consequence of Austria's protest was, that the two partitioning Powers accelerated their proceedings. The King, whose only thought now was to keep up his good understanding with Russia, sent orders to Möllendorf to do nothing in the question of boundaries without the approbation of Catharine. The Empress was above all things intent upon bringing her own affairs in Poland to a final settlement. Sievers, therefore, was exhorted to move forward at double

speed, and Rasumowski was directed in spite of all obstacles to press for the Emperor's adhesion to the treaty of St. Petersburg.

At this moment, when the poison of German discord was destroying the bands which had held the grand Alliance together, the French Revolution was breaking down the last dams which had checked its flow at home, and creating that fearful dictatorship, which was destined, by an unexampled union of the forces of the French nation, to overpower discordant and divided Europe.

END OF VOL. II.

PRINTED BY F. A. BROCKHAUS, LEIPZIG.

00035534

Digitized with financial assistance from the
Government of Maharashtra
on 26 June, 2018